The Dissertation Committee for Joseph Martin Barron Certifies that this is the approved version of the following Dissertation:

Putting Ourselves Together: Academic Belonging, Parental Socialization, and Teacher Support of Latinx Adolescents

Committee:

Erin Rodriguez, Supervisor

Marie-Anne Suizzo, Co-Supervisor

Angela Valenzuela

David Klingbeil

Putting Ourselves Together: Academic Belonging, Parental Socialization, and Teacher Support of Latinx Adolescents

by

Joseph Martin Barron

Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

August 2020

Dedication

To my paternal grandmother and maternal grandfather,

María Georgina Herrera and Sergio Ramírez Campos

Acknowledgements

The completion of this project is owed to a multiplicity of actors who played their part in my time here at the University. From her first lecture on my first day, Dr. Marie-Anne Suizzo modeled for me the true spirit of academia: blending deep thought with methodological rigor, pursuing the answers to her questions with patient inquiry to uncover new psychologies. My years at this school were made indelibly richer for her contribution to my dissertation, to my learning, and to the core of how I process information with others. Though our work together was brief, it was powerful; I look across the years of my future and distinguish a focal point, an individual who I can strive to be more like as I continue to ask my own questions.

Dr. Erin Rodriguez provided me with the opportunity to test my ideas, welcoming me into her laboratory early on. Her dedication to the field inspires me to connect collaboratively with families and children, seeing their thoughts and curiosities not as peripheral to the work, but essential. Her dedication and capacity to confirm the evidence has struck me at the level of heart. I carry our work forward now, in my own way.

To the members of my committee: Drs. Angela Valenzuela and David Klingbeil. Their contribution to the field and to the betterment of the academic systems at large give me hope and inspiration for the educational institutions of our time—needed now, in quantities immense.

During my stay, a number of professors have also left their mark on me—I carry their lectures in my mind, their techniques in my pocket. Deborah Tharinger, Lisa Lasater, Kevin Stark, Delida Sanchez, Ricardo Ainslie, Sarah-Kate Bearman, Stephanie Cawthon, Greg Allen and Tim Keith. In their own way, they have shown me what it

means to merge clinical compassion with excellent theory, and the courage to dive deep into the human experience to address behaviors, emotions, desires, and dreams. And to the professor who believed I was ready for graduate school before I even applied, David Yeager's words and ideas still make me come alive.

A polymer of graduate students from different cohorts and specializations have helped me feel not alone the last six years: Annette Leija, Lauren Smith, Kathy Stanton, Becca Hammond, Gabriela Echavarria, Megha Joshi, Ben Paly, Yasmine Jassal, Anthony Nash, and the person who convinced me to apply to the program, Jackie Caemmerer. You all make me feel like I am part of the team.

Since this project examines not only the effects of teachers and students, but also families, I thank the following people close to me. Immense gratitude to my brother Jon who, though younger, is mathematically more advanced than me, and helped me study for the GRE. To Austin, whose love of films and media kept me curious and intrigued as I escaped into his world on especially tired nights. To my wife Kassidy, who was unsure of what we were getting ourselves into when we began, who shoved me along during these final steps: we can now look towards the horizon and envision a future with, hopefully, more frequent outings, rest, and playtime with our daughter. And to that most demanding of three-year-olds: I hope we can keep making memories chaotic, invisible buildings, and tall trees, forever.

A mis padres, Martin y Silvia Barron, esta dedicación es más que todo para ustedes. En una forma, este documento deberás es logro suyo. Aquí estoy, ya acabe, y su esfuerzo no fue en vano. Nunca lo fue. Ahora puedo caminar hacia adelante. Sus oraciones, sus chistes, sus profecías, y su fuego, fueron energía viva para mí. Gracias amá. Gracias apá. Los quiero mucho.

Abstract

Putting Ourselves Together: Academic Belonging, Parental Socialization, and Teacher Support of Latinx Adolescents

Joseph Martin Barron, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2020

Supervisor: Erin Rodriguez, Co-Supervisor: Marie-Anne Suizzo

Latinx students continue to lag behind other students in academic achievement across their academic career. One variable that has significantly predicted academic achievement in adolescents is their level of academic belonging. This study measured the relationship between Latinx adolescents' (ages 10 to 15 years old) academic belonging, their parental academic socialization (PAS), as well as the teacher emotional and academic support they receive. Ethnographic impressions and observations of the families involved in the study are discussed. The study used correlations, as well as a regression analysis to examine the variance explained in academic belonging when regressed on PAS and teacher support. In addition, Hayes' PROCESS analysis was used to examine the indirect effects of predictor variables on academic achievement and academic behaviors. Results indicated that teacher support predicted academic belonging to a greater extent than did PAS. In addition, academic belonging positively mediated the effect of teacher support on academic achievement and academic behavior measures. Implications for future researchers, clinicians, parents, and teachers are discussed.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction

In spite of the rhetoric and efforts to close the achievement gap at national levels of policy for students of ethnic minority backgrounds, Latinx students continue to work within a system of education that mitigates their efforts towards longitudinal, academic success (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011; Boser, Wilhelm, & Hanna, 2014). This Latinx academic achievement gap is observed in a variety of areas across the academic landscape: for reading, mathematics, and science scores, Latinx students score lower than average compared to their White peers (Campbell, 2001); for college completion rates, White students graduate at 62% while Latinx students graduate at 45.8 % (Shapiro et al., 2017); for high school dropout rates, Latinx students stand at the highest rates at 1 out of 10 (Pew Research, 2018); and for office behavioral referrals, Latinx students are almost twice as likely to be referred for the same problem behavior as compared to White students (Skiba et al., 2011). Moreover, studies that focus on the determinants of health indicate relationships between lower levels of education and negative well-being in Latinx individuals from low-resource schools (Braveman, Egerter, and Williams, 2011).

In light of this pervasive and well-documented academic achievement gap for Latinx students, this study sought to analyze the variables that can highlight the pathways by which Latinx students find academic success. The primary variable of interest is academic belonging, previously defined as the degree to which an individual feels a sense of connection to the academic collective, and connected to identity and achievement in a number of ways. More importantly, the study sought to obtain a greater understanding of the degree to which academic belonging in Latinx students is related to the academic support that Latinx students experience from the two major systems and figures in their lives: that of their Latinx parents and that of their school teachers. Ultimately, the

findings from such a study can help us to identify the adults in the lives of Latinx students who positively shape their sense of belonging in school settings, and consequently, their academic future.

I conducted an associational study to examine the relationship between parent socialization, teacher support, and academic belonging. I included gender, grade level, generational status, level of acculturation, Spanish and English ability, and parental level of education as control variables, as previous studies suggest that these relate to both parental socialization and academic identity (as discussed in the literature review below). Holding these variables constant allowed for a better estimation of the effect of parent socialization and teacher support on academic belonging. I also examined mediational models to understand the mechanistic role of belonging in academic achievement and academic behaviors. Ultimately, the results from this analysis helped to answer the primary question about whether the combination of both forms of support more significantly explains Latinx students' sense of academic belonging, rather than a singular form of support.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

I begin with a brief description of the roots of the systemic barrier that impedes the Latinx student's academic success, and highlight the historical, longstanding nature of the problem. I discuss the socio-cultural factors that previous scholars have identified as problematic for Latinx students to underscore the incongruence between the academic needs of the Latinx scholar, and the educational services that the modern-day system of education offers. I then define the terms of interest that will set the context for the rest of this study.

CONTEXT OF LATINX ACHIEVEMENT GAP

With the push from the national system of education for schools to implement rigorous and standardized testing, teachers report feeling at a loss when having to teach students from minority backgrounds: specifically, teachers can implement practices which fail to account for the unique perspectives and cultural viewpoints of students from non-majority cultures (Athanases, Achinstein, Curry, & Ogawa, 2016). In addition, detailed and longitudinal work suggests that the very structure of the education system is a poor match for the affective and cognitive needs of Latinx students (Valenzuela, 1999). For example, researchers posit that for Latinx students there exists a prerequisite need "to be cared for" by school staff before the Latinx student in turn reciprocates and "cares for" the needs of the school. Moreover, by remaining in a treatment-as-usual approach that insists that classrooms and campus-policies follow Euro-American, White- centric values, the educational system deprives the Latinx student of the relational and interpersonal strengths gifted her from her culture-of-origin (Valenzuela 1999; Garza & Crawford, 2005). Said another way: the very structure of the American school system effectually removes a portion of the social capital integral to the Latinx student's cultural

framework. Further, studies from the bilingualism literature demonstrate this "subtractive schooling" at work when, rather than help to foster a proficiency in their native Spanish language, teachers prioritize the English language for their Latinx students—a pedagogical choice with measurable and negative ramifications (Menken & Kleyn, 2010).

Regrettably, the racial and discriminatory practices that pervade the K-12 system have a deep rooted history in academia itself—with the mythology of the educationally antagonistic Mexican-American parent promoted in the psychological literature across the greater portion of the twentieth century. In his historical review, Valencia (2002) describes that as early as the 1920s scholars referred to school-age Latinx students as having "pedagogical retardation" when compared to White peers—an assumption based on the observation that Latinx students lacked the ability to speak English correctly, transferred schools frequently, and appeared to practice unhealthy eating habits. In addition, the Latinx family was targeted as disordered and characterized as ignorant of the "full value" of a public school education. This continued into the 1960s, when the academe published "cultural deprivation" literature in which Mexican- American children and their families were described as culturally disadvantaged and intellectually deprived. Ultimately, these ideas were framed within a *deficit* model of conceptualization—one that fails to recognize the cultural power embedded in the unique, interpersonal structure of the Latinx cultural framework.

As a result of this systemic discrimination that has taken various forms throughout the century, Latinx students continue to perform at lower rates of academic success when compared to Euro American students across different areas. Valencia (2010) describes this Latinx academic failure in three ways. First, academic school failure for Latinx students is *persistent*: Latinx students have had major problems with academic success from the earliest data points in the 1920s, in terms of either normative data or direct

comparisons (Campbell, Hombo, & Mazzeo, 2000; Texas Education Agency, 1998). Second, Latinx academic failure is *pervasive*: Latinx students experience academic failure at multiple locations in the country, observed from the local level (Austin Independent School District, 2009), all the way to the national level (National Center for Education, 2009). Lastly, academic school failure is *disproportional*, especially seen in the high school dropout numbers of Latinx students compared to White students (Valencia, 2010). Indeed, a significant disparity between White and Latinx students in high school dropout rates, with some estimates demonstrating that White students attend college at a 49% rate whereas Latinx students attend college at a 23% rate. In light of this disparity, this study provides greater understanding of the systems at work with this particular ethnic group, and helps to identify the agents in Latinx students' lives who can counter this Latinx academic achievement gap.

With this systemic discrimination in mind, researchers have sounded the call for a more "critical caring framework" where both child and parent are seen as individuals worthy of targeted effort, that calls for ecologically inclusive goals that sees the Latinx family system holistically (Gonzalez and Ayala-Alcanter, 2008; Piña-Watson, Lorenzo-Blanco, Dornhecker, Martinez, & Nagoshi, 2016). Further, by considering the problem through the lens of ecological systems model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), researchers are able to understand the impact that multiple and interpersonal systems have on the Latinx individual's academic experience. In line with this strength-based, family-positive approach, the study examines the variable of parental academic socialization, in addition to teacher support, to gain a more sound understanding of the role that adults from both microsystems play in the long term, academic development of the Latinx student.

MAIN CONSTRUCTS OF INTEREST

For the sake of clarification, discussed here are the major factors of interest, with descriptions on how they have previously been understood in the literature. While their effects and the role they play in Latinx students' academic achievement will be more thoroughly explored throughout the following sections, understanding their functions here will help to anchor the reader into their meaning and function.

Identity and belonging

In order to fully appreciate the importance of academic belonging, it is first helpful to understand its connection to the construct of academic identity. Researchers have previously defined and measured academic identity in a number of ways. (Osborne, 1997; Smith, Estudillo, Kang, 2010; Strambler, Linke, Ward, 2013; Finn, 1989). In one instance, Osborne (1997) defines an individual's identification with academics (or *academic identity*) as the degree to which an individual's attitude towards academics affects their, overall, evaluation of the self. Within this framework, academic identity is best understood with the constructs of self-esteem (i.e., "I am happy with my academic performance"), and academic self-concept (i.e., "I typically am good at reading."). Therefore, an adolescent with a positive sense of academic identity might say: "I am typically the kind of person who is good at reading which, overall, makes me feel like a successful person." With this framework for academic identity, Smith, Estudillo and Kang (2010) examined academic identity in eighth grade Black and White students and found that, although Black students reported more identification with academics, they achieved lower GPAs than their White counterparts—a finding which the authors interpreted as reflective of a systemic dilemma faced by students of color. In addition, these results perhaps reflect that although these students of color had a desire to perform well academically, other factors should also be investigated, such as the messages they

receive from the agents who represent academic institutions: the dynamic validation from teachers in response to minority-adolescents' vocalization and desire to connect to the school.

In a study with a large number of ethnic minority students, Strambler, Linke and Ward (2013) used multi-level modeling to examine the relationship between parental socialization, academic identification, and academic achievement in Black and Latinx students. Results indicated that academic identification mediated the relationship between parental academic socialization and academic achievement in two relevant ways: students reported higher academic achievement when parents employed teaching, and when parents talked about the future. Although identity and socialization were measured differently than the proposed study—with demographic variables of interest distinct from the present study—the findings from this article provide evidence that parents shape the way their children identify with academics on a psycho-emotional level. Studies such as this one, then, point to the potential impact of students' academic identity on their academics. Finally, important to the current study, Matthews (2014) defines academic identity as how the individual describes herself through "academic values, school belonging, regard, and performance," best measured in Latinx individuals when the measure of academic identity includes a subscale of belonging or interdependence to school. (The underlying psychological theory that grounds this self/collective process will be outlined further in the section on "Collective Identity Theory.")

Parental Academic Socialization

In a recent literature review, Suizzo (2014) defines *Parental academic socialization* (PAS) as the process by which parents hold values and goals for their children's intellectual and academic development, which motivates parents to interact

with their children in ways that promote said values and goals. Further, PAS works on a number of dimensions: the way academic values/goals are communicated to the student/child; the behaviors and actions taken to ensure academic achievement occurs; and the environments created by the parent to foster the desired academic growth (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004; Bradley, 2002, McWayne, 2004). For example, McWayne et al. discovered that, with preschool families, conversations that centered on education, as well as at-home activities that promoted a culture of learning, positively predicted academic functioning in children. In addition, PAS has been demonstrated to be the most meaningful predictor of academic achievement across ethnic groups in a number of meta-analyses that include Latinx families as groups of interest. (Fan and Chen, 2001; Hill and Tyson, 2009; Jeynes, 2007).

School and Teacher Support

The field has understood school and teacher academic support as the way in which schools and those who represent them support the academic learning of the students who attend the school. Researchers have studied school academic support both qualitatively and quantitatively, with the variable coming to predict a number of important academic outcomes that include motivation and positive ethnic regard (Alfaro, Umana-Taylor, Bamaca, 2006; Rivas-Drake, 2011). One example of the positive effects of teacher support is reported in Alfaro et al (2006), where researchers use a path model to demonstrate how teacher support positively predicts Latinx students' academic motivation. This pathway between teacher support and academic motivation is particularly relevant to the proposed study in that: a) like academic identity, motivation has been highly correlated with academic achievement; and b) the study at hand examines similar pathways between teacher-support and internal factors related to

achievement. In addition, Plunkett, Henry, Houltberg, Sands, & Abarca-Mortensen (2008), utilized a dominance analysis that suggested that Mexican-origin adolescents who received teacher support were more likely to report higher academic motivation, as well as GPA. Finally, Alfaro & Umaña-Taylor (2015) examined Latinx students' self-report of teacher-support throughout high school and found a significant connection between teachers' academic support and the motivation that students reported. Interestingly, the longitudinal patterns across all four years of high school for teachers differed from that of parental support, which suggests that the support parents provide to their children may operate in a manner distinct from the support teachers provide to students during adolescence. In summary, teacher support has been established to be predictive of how motivated a Latinx student is in school and may also contribute to students' academic progress in its own unique way—important to this study in that teacher support can predict intrapersonal factors that subsequently affect academic achievement.

In addition to these studies, Wentzel (1997) demonstrated that whenever students felt their teachers cared for them or engaged them in an interpersonal way, it positively predicted motivational outcomes for students. In her conceptualization, Wentzel operationalized this specific form of teacher support as *pedagogical caring*—a process by which teachers model genuine caring, engage in conversations to demonstrate an empathic and mutual understanding, and expect/encourage their students to perform to the best of their intellectual ability. This conceptualization of teacher support is especially relevant to this study, in that Latinx students are hypothesized to be oriented to interpersonal relationships in a unique way (Santiago 2002).

While these studies demonstrate the relationship between pedagogical caring/teacher-support and academic motivation, I examine how this relationship translates to a specific dimension of identification—to verify if Latinx students that report

this personal experience of support from teachers also report a higher sense of connection to those academic environments. Although academic motivation is demonstrably related to achievement, it is situation-specific, domain-specific and non-stable (Linnenbirink & Pintrich, 2002). In contrast, although from early to middle adolescence aspects of academic identity can fluctuate across grade levels (Wigfield and Eccles, 2002; a variable for which I will control in the analysis), changes at the level of identity occur in stages over the lifespan, rather than situation-to-situation (Eccles 2009). Together, these findings suggest academic outcomes that emerge as a result of changes in Latinx identity may be different than those which emerge from changes in educational motivation. Further exploration of this mediating variable is presently needed.

IDENTITY AND ACADEMICS IN LATINX STUDENTS

As stated above, one of the factors central to the process of academic success for Latinx students is that of academic belonging, and how the individual understands the self in relation to the academic domain (Oyserman, 2008). Although numerous studies have examined other aspects of the Latinx self (i.e., ethnic identity; acculturative identity) the proposed study seeks to understand how the Latinx individual views their self within the collective system of education. In order to understand the factors that contribute to the formation of this collective academic identity in Latinx adolescents, it is helpful to comprehend: the theoretical basis for why humans need to belong; the psychosocial space that Latinx adolescents find themselves in; and the cognitions related to society that develop during this time. Following this, I provide a definition of academic collective identity for Latinx students and explain why understanding academic identity in this more collective sense is helpful to explore the largely unchanged gap in academics.

Collective Identity Theory

As human individuals, an aspect of meaning central to our shared experience and development is how we relate to those around us (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). From the genesis of our human society, the importance to connection to the greater 'we' has been observed in our ancestral primal relational rituals through body paint, through music and sound, in an effort to experience transcendental states of communion, one with the other (Jordania, 2015; Hogg & Williams, 2004). This need for interpersonal bond and formation has been echoed throughout the psychological literature over the past 20th century (Horney 1945; Sullivan, 1953; Bowlby 1973) with theorists describing states of health as being predicted by the types of attachments and relations that are modeled for us from birth and subsequently played out in peer and school relationships. Interestingly, although models of social identity have underlined the role of the categorically-distinct-individual who engages with society in self-focused- ways, other theorists have argued for a more European model of social identity, whereby individuals embedded and interwoven into an environment experience a dynamic interaction, a give-and-take in which systems react to and shape the reality of the human in their midst (Hogg & Williams, 2000). Within this framework, an understanding of collective identity is important, defined as the sense of belonging to a group. In addition, Polletta and Jasper (2001) provide another synthesized definition of collective identity, describing it as "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution" (p. 285). Importantly, collectivist identities (not to be confused with *collectivism,* a dualistic way of categorizing humans, i.e., antithesis of *individualism*) can be understood in material, cultural concepts such as the names, symbols, and clothes; yet, also seen in behavioral outcomes such as verbal styles and rituals. As will be reiterated through this document, I am personally interested in

observing the level of collective identity that Latinx students have towards their local, academic context (i.e., school; teachers; activities), and to measure whether or not that belonging mediates the path between systems of support, and behavioral/academic outcomes.

To provide further context: Collective Identity Theory emerges from the idea that throughout the lifespan one finds themselves wondering to which group they belong; when one finally identifies with said group, one then internalizes the identity of that group or collective entity (Ashmore, 2004). Although it has been established elsewhere that ethnic identity can come to bring a myriad of positive outcomes for individuals for whom it is strong, I examine how Latinx students navigate their feelings of school belonging, and the factors that predict how connected they feel to the academic space they inhabit; to see if the connection is found to be significantly predictive of either academic achievement or academic behaviors in the school system. Helpful to the study is the work of David Cross and his collective theory of nigrescence i.e., the product of becoming blacker and deepening your sense of identity to the category of blackness (Vandiver, Fhagen-Smith, Cokley, Cross, & Worrell, 2001). With this dynamic process in mind, I am interested in understanding how this non-static, non-situational process of collective academic identity is grown and fostered, and the change agents responsible for growing a Latinx individual's experience of school connectedness. Having described the theoretical framework of what collective identity is and why it is important, I now discuss the Latinx-experience of identity and how collective identity theory relates to the Latinx-adolescent's cultural and social engagement in the world.

The Latinx Adolescent

Adolescence is a time of change, a moment in the life cycle where one begins to shape goals and personality in preparation for adulthood (Erikson 1968; Arnett, 2000). In developmental terms, adolescents are situated in a psychologically potent space, where the choices they make can influence their lifelong identity (Erikson, Paul, Heider, & Gardner, 1959). Indeed, adolescents are asked to make decisions about their social status, their family system, and post-secondary education plans (Yeager and Bundick, 2009; Eccles, Lorde, and Midgley, 1999). With adolescence being a period of transition with such decisional ramifications, the question emerges: how do Latinx-adolescent-students experience dimensions of their identity during this period of transition, and how much of this is shaped by the messages presented from the microsystems around them? The present study's focus on schools and families develops in part from an understanding of ecological systems theory (Urie Bronfenbrenner 1977)—specifically, that individuals are influenced by the multiplicity of agents and organizations that surround them. As such, I analyzed the levels that most directly impacted the individual within the microsystemic layer, namely, the family and the school.

Latinx adolescents may experience societal development in a manner distinct from their White-American cohort: rather than driven by a desire for autonomy and success motivated by an effort to build the self-differentiated individual (Erikson et. al, 1959), Latinx adolescents can be driven by a more family/relationally oriented, communal desire to grow within the counsel of a guardian—a value that persists into young adulthood (Santiago-Rivera, 2002). Building off previous studies that demonstrate that a healthy root in ethnic identity for minority students positively relates to academic achievement (Umaña-Taylor, et al.; Chang & Le, 2010; Chavous et al., 2003), this study attempts to bring clarity to the link between Latinx adolescents' sense of self and

academic achievement—not within the context of the ethnic self, but rather, the academically-connected self. The following section further investigates the unique cultural space occupied by Latinx students compared to other student-groups, and how Latinx students' cultural idiosyncrasies can impact their academic engagement.

Nuances within Academics, Identity, and Ethnicity

In its examination of Latinx adolescents' social-emotional engagement with the culture of academics, the field has produced seemingly contrasting results and theories about the factors that drive Latinx students' academic behaviors (Griffin, 2002; Kaplan, 1999; Taylor & Graham, 2007). For example, when Kaplan (1999) studied the experiences of adolescent minority students who transferred from a low-income school to a college-forward academic school, the students reported that their previous circle of peers held them back from academic achievement (Kaplan, 1999). In other words, absent intervention, adolescents in minority cultures surrounded by same-ethnic peers may be less likely to foster their connection to academics. Moreover, Taylor and Graham (2007) found that Latinx adolescents were more likely to report admiration and respect for academically low-achieving, poorly behaved peers rather than high achieving peers—which suggests a lack of intrinsic valuation of academics on behalf of Latinx adolescents. On the other hand, researchers have also found that Latinx individuals verbally and openly express personal value towards aspects of the educational process, and communicate stronger feelings towards academic success than same-age, White peers (Fuligni, 2001). In addition, other studies demonstrate how a positive Latinx identification in Latinx students predicts a number of positive academic outcomes such as self-efficacy and achievement (Hughes, Witherspoon, Rivas-Drake, & West-Bey, 2009; Ong, Phinney, & Dennis, 2006; Supple et al., 2006; Oyserman, 2008).

In light of the complicated findings and theories related to minority students' perception of in-group identity, racism, and achievement (Ufkes, Calcagno, Glasford, & Dovidio, 2016; Petrone, 2016), I attempt to integrate a social and communal understanding of belonging into the study's model of psychological success for Latinx students. Indeed, a case study with Latinx students who found academic success underscores that, if they are to succeed and integrate a positive academic identity, it may be important for minority adolescents to develop a social connection to their educational setting (Barajas-López, 2014). With this in mind, I hope to clarify the importance of Latinx adolescents' sense of belonging to the school system—one of the theorized pieces of academic identity—and further the field's understanding of the value Latinx students place on academics.

In addition to Latinx adolescents holding group and family-centered values distinct from students of more White, Euro-American cultures, the academic experience that Latinx students encounter is also distinct from the experience of students in other group and family-centered cultures. For example, although students of Asian descent and students of Latino descent both view themselves as connected to a larger system of family—both Latinx and Asian students working to honor their parents' laborious efforts (Valenzuela & Dornbusch, 1994)—one study that examined the unconscious racial bias in academic peers indicated that Latinx students receive unique, subtle societal messages that denote an ethnic incompatibility with education (Graham, 2001). In contrast, Asian-American students from certain communities may be perceived as "biologically" and "culturally" predisposed to succeed academically, with society seeming to perceive Asian-American students as being intelligent, having fluid science and math skills, and generally mild-mannered (Kao, 2000). This is not to say that Asian-American students do not themselves face discrimination with distressing mental health issues and outcomes.

Indeed, studies depict the comparably higher rates of suicidal ideation and attempts, and self-reported descriptions on the effects of unfulfilled family expectations and racism on suicidal ideation for Asian-American students (Kisch, Leino, & Silverman, 2005; Wont, Koo Tran, Chiu and Mok, 2011). Simply put, the domains in which students from some Asian-American cultures experience these issues, and the results that manifest psychically, differs from some Latinx students.

Further evidence of this differing experience between Latinx students and Asian-American students from certain cultures can be seen in a structural equation modeling study conducted by Chang and Le (2010). In this study, researchers worked with a sample of Latinx-American and Asian-American—specifically, Chinese and Vietnamese—adolescents to examine the effect of perceived multiculturalism (i.e., the perception that the school setting values cultural diversity) on ethnocultural empathy (i.e., empathic understanding of and appreciation of ethnic/cultural diversity), and its moderating effects on academic outcomes (i.e., GPA). Interestingly, although (perceived) schoolwide multiculturalism positively predicted ethnocultural empathy in both groups of students, ethnocultural empathy only went on to positively relate to grade point average for Latinx students, but not for Asian-American students. Chang and Le hypothesize that the experience of a school's cultural openness may uniquely affect Latinx students, in that openness reliably predicts academic success in Latinx students, but not Asian-American students. In other words, while relations to larger groups may be important for students from both minority groups, the experience of feeling welcomed by the system engages Latinx students' academic achievement in a way that is, measurably, unique. These differences between the experiences of Latinx students and students of other cultures point to the need to further understand the predictors of academic identity in this

specific population; a group that appears to approach academics communally, and responds to diversity-inclusive environments in a certain way.

The Importance of Belonging in Academic Identity

The lack of understanding concerning identity and its conceptualization for students of color may relate to how the field has come to define the *self*. Psychology, as a discipline, has historically sought to understand the nature of human thought, behavior, and emotion within the *individual* (Markus, 2008). Indeed, for the majority of its existence, psychology maintained a focus on Western-centric cultures which related to the "self-made-man" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), with a basis in a Euro-American model that rewarded the self-realized individual who achieved success through his own will, strength, and intelligence.

Although viewing academic success through this hyper-individual lens can explain much about Western, Euro-American ways of thought and behavior, this approach may not accurately capture the experiences of individuals who belong to societies where the *self* is directly and experientially connected to an immediate system—an experience central to the lives of those of Latin American descent (Santiago-Rivera, 2002). Moreover, failure to understand how Latinx adolescents experience the 'self' within community can impede a fuller understanding of the weight and felt consequences that result when, due to academic barriers, Latinx students experience disconnect from a system. Indeed, it is interesting that when Latinx individuals report a crisis of identity, this experience is described not only in terms of a geographical displacement, but also in terms of social estrangement (Anzaldua, 1987; Carrillo, 2013; Caldera & Lindsey, 2013). Given the weight and importance, then, of belonging and community for the Latinx student, an examination of connection or belonging is appropriate to accurately measure

identity in this population, especially as it relates to a communal setting such as schools. Speaking to this connection, Nichols (2006) underscores the importance of school belonging as a construct composed of the social support from school staff and peers, the academic support of teachers, and the environment/habitus in which learning takes place (i.e., computers; spaciousness; outdoor equipment). Restated, Latinx students, perceptive of the quality of their education even at the level of items and objects, develop an internal measure of how the system values their learning, which can affect their level of engagement with said system. In short, school belonging appears to be an important dimension to consider when measuring academic identity and is considered as such in this study.

Further evidence that signals the importance of a multidimensional understanding of academic identity is found in Matthews (2014), a cross sectional study that examined 330 African-American and Latinx adolescent students to measure the associations between different theoretical dimensions of academic identity. Using a number of analytical procedures (i.e., correlational matrix; hierarchical analysis; multivariate analysis), Matthews found that, although most dimensions of academic identity did not relate either highly with each other nor with academic achievement, the variables of intrinsic value (e.g., "being a good student is central to how I think of myself") and school belonging (e.g., "My relationships with my teachers and peers and at my school make me feel like I belong there.") were significant predictors. First, intrinsic value of school in Latinx students predicted a positive sense of self efficacy, the belief that one possesses the ability to complete a task with success. Second, intrinsic value and school belonging strongly correlated with each other. From these results, Matthews proposes that, "as an individual bonds with the school community, the school's values can become internalized over time, manifesting as the values of the individual" (p. 150). What this

indicates, then, is that academic identity: a) can predict academic processes in meaningful ways; and b) is more accurately assessed when the measure accounts for a student's sense of connection to their academic environment.

This theoretical understanding asserted by Matthews (2014) of how a sense of belonging and connection contributes meaningfully to the formation of academic identity in students of minority cultures is further examined by Matthews, Banerjee, and Lauermann (2014). These researchers sought to understand the interaction between Academic identity and Mastery Goal orientation—an orientation characterized by persistent effort, continual self-improvement, and a desire to master the content at hand. Having understood how, for minority students, academic identity is strongly associated with having a sense of social connection, researchers similarly defined academic identity as composed of two different components: a component of *Value* (i.e., the intrinsic importance, personal interest, and enjoyment of academic tasks as reported by the student); and a component of *Belonging* (i.e., wanting to belong to a group—in this case, the school). Moreover, although school belonging is important for most adolescents, it is uniquely beneficial for students from marginalized populations (Faircloth and Hamm, 2005; Sanchez, Colon, & Esparza; Walton & Cohen, 2011). Researchers found a significant relationship between Academic Identity–*Belonging* and Mastery Orientation, which suggests that Latinx students who experience a sense of connection and belonging towards school and academics come to place a premium on mastering content and adapt positively to failure. This finding is important when considering how such an adaptation can increase self-esteem and achievement in college populations—important when one considers the achievement gap for Latinx students in higher education (Robins & Pals, 2002).

In addition, the findings from Matthews et al (2014) demonstrate the importance that Academic Identity has to predict the day to day study habits that Latinx students enact. Although this study does not measure mastery orientation per se, the Matthew et al (2014) study lays the theoretical groundwork for the current examination, and highlights how specific dimensions of academic identity can powerfully predict the day-to-day academic habits enacted by Latinx students. Moreover, given the unique predictive power that school belonging has on academic achievement, the findings underscore the need for more studies to examine how significant others in the microsystem of the Latinx adolescent can enhance the adolescent's sense of academic identity— connections which I measured.

SCHOOLS, TEACHER SUPPORT, AND LATINX STUDENTS

Having examined: a) the interpersonal, systematic barriers experienced by Latinx students across their educational trajectory; and b) how *academic identity*, and specifically, *belonging* in minority students plays an integral and predictive role in efficacious, studious behaviors that help overcome these barriers, this review now examines the kinds of support the school provides to Latinx students, and the positive and negative elements that affect their academic experience and sense of connection. This section will then explore the current system of education and its attempts to address the societal barriers and to increase Latinx Collective Academic Identity. I outline how schools driven by underlying philosophies can help reduce societal barriers for Latinx students and increase a healthy sense of academic self. I follow this with a description of where schools have also been found wanting, as well as why it remains necessary to understand the work of the parental unit.

How Teachers Shape Identity

There are a number of researchers who have highlighted the theoretical framework by which teachers and schools help students to adopt values related to academic belonging (Noddings, 1992; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Anderman, 2003). Noddings (1992) describes different components by which pedagogical caring on the part of teacher comes to shape the student's sense of belonging and value—mechanisms that help students to internalize academic values (Wentzel 1997). First, Noddings recommends a form of modeling absent of coercion, whereby the teacher *teaches* caring by *showing* caring towards the student. Interestingly, this demonstration of modeled "caring" aligns with what Valenzuela (2002) highlights is necessary for Latinx students to feel a sense of connection to school. Next, Nodding describes how dialogue that is experienced as genuine by the student— that gives way to the "why questions"—effectively trains the student to acquire different "habits of mind" where they internalize a desire to acquire the correct type of information. This effectually helps the transition from student into scholar (Stevens & Olivarez, 2007). Noddings thirdly describes the importance of practice within the teacher-support-relationship, whereby mentalities are shaped. Essentially, the teacher comes to represent the institution of academia or school, a figure with the power and agency to mold certain attitudes on how to look at the world. In short, to make change at the level of identity Noddings prescribes that: "The experience of caregiving should initiate or contribute to the desired attitude, but the conditions have to be right, and people are central to the setting" (p. 24).

Current Practices and Challenges with Teachers

The microsystem of the school is, undoubtedly, a factor that impacts the lived experiences of Latinx students. Teachers, staff, and the philosophy that drive the educational practices within the system all contribute to the way that the student comes to

understand who they are within the system (Erikson, 1996; Anderman, 2003). With regards to the study of diversity in pedagogical settings, associational studies indicate that both Latinx and Black students experience a sense of security within multiethnic environments (Juvonen, Nishina, & Graham, 2006) — and describe fewer feelings of loneliness, less harassment from other school peers, and an increased perception of self-worth.

However, numerical diversity in itself may not result in healthy educational perceptions for Latinx students; instead, healthy perceptions are contingent on the way said diversity is frame and worded. For example, social psychologists Park and Judd (2005) assert that, if not communicated carefully, explicit group differentiation can result in an increase of intergroup bias. In other words, if teachers do not converse about diversity in a positive way, the saliency of the diversity can actually create difficulties for students of minority cultures. Additional findings from the review are that a color-blind approach may result in a negative self-view, and that students of ethnic minority groups experience an increase in self-esteem when they have a positive view of themselves within their own groups. The researchers suggest that when school practices are driven by a *value-diversity* message, rather than a color-blind approach or mere categorical distinction, the school positively influences the experience of belonging for students of color. As it relates to identity, then, there is a healthy and welcoming way by which the agents in the school can make Latinx students feel that they belong to the system.

In addition to positive diversity messages, other studies have documented the way that the adults in the educational community create effects, both positive and negative, in the lives of Latinx adolescents. For example, Latinx adolescents reported that an experience of public ethnic regard from the teachers in their school—i.e., Latinx students' perception that the adults at the school had positive views of their ethnic group

(Sellers et al, 1997)—predicted higher levels of engagement and academic achievement as measured by GPA (Rivas-Drake, 2011). Moreover, in line with the general finding that a celebration of diversity can lead to healthy outcomes, qualitative studies identify the underlying components of messages from school personnel that create meaningful experiences for Latinx students. For instance, Gonzalez (2009) describes effective ways by which teachers can integrate the Mexican-American experience into the school culture itself and, consequently, promote healthy identity development in their students. In this study, participants reported that a sense of renewed commitment to school occurred when: a) they attended community meetings that dismantled negative racial stereotypes; and b) when teachers praised their dual language ability as asset, rather than as lack of acculturation. In summary, whenever teachers make Latinx students feel that their cultural ways are "normal" and "equal in status" as their White counterparts, a well-constructed sense of identity and self develops, which can in turn affect academics in a positive direction.

Aside from the previously described overarching historical and systematic bias that negatively affects the educational trajectory of the Latinx student (i.e., negative expectations for Latinx students), a number of studies underscore the cognitive stereotypes active in the minds of instructors within the classroom (Gonzalez and Ayala-Alcantar, 2008; Brown, 2008). In a study with pre-service teachers, findings indicated that when students spoke with Spanish accent (i.e., low-status accent) teachers were more likely to characterize the students as less intelligent.

However, teachers did not respond in the same way towards students with other noticeable accents (e.g., Australian). Furthermore, when teachers associated Latinx student with issues related to immigration status, teachers were more likely to view the students as unwilling to acculturate to the needs of the school. Finally, teachers in the

study reported the common stereotype that others perceive Latinx parents as not valuing education, nor wanting to involve themselves in the educative process. These findings relate to the present study in that the biases that teachers hold affect the way the teacher supports the Latinx students, which can in turn affect the student's sense of connection and belonging to the school.

Equipped with an understanding of the implicit biases (i.e., Spanish accent associated with less academic orientation) that minority students experience within academic settings, a number of interventions with varying levels of success have been implemented to affect the academic achievement and engagement of Latino students (Cerezo & McWhirter, 2012; Walten & Cohen, 2011; Aronson, Fried & Good, 2002). Cerezo & McWhirter (2012) implemented the Latino Education Equity Project, a program that utilized a series of discussions led by a trained facilitator with Latinx College students that centered on Critical Race theory. To validate the experiences of the Latinx students—a process theorized to reduce the feelings associated with feeling misunderstood by the system—the conversations focused on the salient differences between home life and college life, in the hopes that this would lead to greater adjustment to collegiate culture. The results, however, were mixed, with control group and treatment group showing no significant differences in cultural congruity. In light of the literature review on the effects of teachers on Latinx students, perhaps the intervention would have yielded better results if a professor (i.e., someone who represented the system of education in a meaningful way) had led the conversations. At any rate, studies such as this one demonstrate the challenges inherent to closing the academic gap of Latinx students and call for a more clear identification of the variables and agents of change required to enact experiences of belonging in Latinx students— factors which this proposed study hopes to clarify further.

In addition, Barajas-López (2014) collected the experiences of four different Latinx students in an ethnographic study, where students described how their interactions with teachers affected their engagement with mathematics. Importantly, Latinx students reported that the type of relationship maintained with the teacher affected students' level of engagement with the specific math task at hand. This finding suggests that, how students perceive teacher support can influence how students then perceive themselves, and the academic tasks they undertake.

Schools as Tools of Cultural Validation

As discussed in sections above, there are a number of ways by which the Latinx-student-community faces marginalization within the confines of the school system. In a systematic review of classrooms and curriculums, researchers discuss how general cultural bias negatively affects marginalized communities—specifically, in the domains of cultural knowledge, attitudes and values (Darder 1991; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985). Indeed, researchers suggest that dominant school cultures function, perhaps unintentionally, to marginalize communities when they are dissimilar to the hegemonic school culture, effectively "disconfirming" forms of knowledge that Latinx students carry with them as they enter school. Further, in another systematic examination of the practices of school through a Critical Race lens, Yosso (2002) argues that traditional curricular structures reveal a hidden curriculum that works against the cultural mindsets of Latinx students.

In light of these overarching cultural biases that trickle down into classroom practices, we now examine how schools can intentionally work to alleviate certain academic biases and subtractive schooling that Latinx students otherwise experience. Firstly, according to the No Child Left Behind (2007), with an eye towards closing the

achievement gap schools should allow teachers more flexibility in how they teach. If teachers exercise more latitude in how they choose to transmit information to their students, students can then engage in frameworks that integrate their cultural factors, and thus facilitate learning for Latinx students. As previously reviewed, Latinx students who identified as being academically-engaged report that whenever schools manage to disrupt the negative racial stereotypes associated with minority status, a greater experience of healthy identity and wholeness is experienced (Rivas-Drake, 2011; Perez-Felkner, 2015). In this way, the flexible and personable nature of a school with a stated goal towards closing the achievement gap should be able to create a micro-culture that mitigates the negative effect of society on Latinx children.

In addition, some teachers and schools work to raise standards and expectations while they also provide appropriate levels of support to scaffold Latinx students towards their academic goals (i.e., for a math-based example, see Kennedy & Smolinsky, 2016). For example, Athanases, Achinstein, Curry, & Ogawa (2016) note a number of factors that help activate this educational connection and "college-going culture," such as high expectations and high support to attend college, combined with belief and motivation. Moreover, at the "high-achieving" school where researchers conducted their study, teachers used body language and communication lessons to teach students "codes of power" where the goal was to convey a message that the students were more than able to function in a college environment and act according to the norms in place. In other words, schools committed to the cause, and the teachers who represent them, can foster the identity of the "college-goer" in their Latinx students through various methods of support.

A third way in which schools can facilitate the educational experience for the Latinx adolescent is at the dimension of the interpersonal relationship (Kennedy &

Smolinsky, 2016; Gonazales, Ulloa, & Munoz, 2016)—a process which is highly relevant to this study. Athaneses et al (2016) highlighted the work of key agents in a school system: specifically, the work of "Consuelo," a model-teacher who consistently weaved classroom topics back into notions of "community, family, and identity." These findings underscore that for schools to serve the Latinx community well, merely reducing the classroom lessons to their "functionality" is ineffective; instead, to see different results with this growing population, a new psychology needs consideration—one that is increasingly student-centered and relationally-focused. In summary, schools may have sufficient resources to alter the academic identity of the Latinx student, with schoolteachers being, perhaps, the ideal agents to design the spaces where Latinx students' cultural values are celebrated.

Schools as Locales of Cultural Insensitivity

Having considered the promising implications of what happens when schools 'do it right'—both in the realm of theory and documented effects—there still exists a number of studies that indicate how larger cultural and societal factors can mitigate school teachers' ability to deliver culturally-sensitive practices (Gonzales, Ulloa, & Muñoz, 2016; Blum, 2015). For instance, Gonzales et al. (2016) highlights the lack of understanding between some well-intentioned school- teachers and their Latinx students —specifically, teachers who enter the field with expectations rooted in a white-middle class background and ethos. Indeed, teachers may be unaware of the specific challenges that underprivileged Latinx students face (i.e., necessities of electricity and reduced and free eligibility of lunch). Moreover, Gonzales et al. states that, while some schools are "marketed" as more creative and less bureaucratic, the reality may be less than ideal, with said progressive schools falling into the same test demanding practices observed in

traditional public schools. Lastly, there are instances when the curriculum does not fit the needs of many ELL Latinx students. Ultimately, the many demands can be such that teachers and staff end up burnt out, with less desire to create curriculums to support the specific needs of their Latinx students.

Another area of complication occurs when well-meaning schools attempt to enact academic change towards minority students as a whole, which speaks to the needs of one group of students over the needs of another. For example, Blum (2015) argues that some schools target students who fall under the general umbrella of LIBL (Low Income Black or Latinx students)—a label which can mask important information required to address specific Latinx students' needs (i.e., English Language Learner status; parental capital; poverty status). Furthermore, findings from an ethnography by Paris' (2010) found a mix of positive and negative outcomes related to Latinx students' ability to switch from English into Spanish. Specifically, students at the school described that, although Black students at times described bilingualism as a strength for their Latinx peers, it was also a source of pain and exclusion for their Black peers, who themselves do not have the same language connection. What this finding highlights is that, given the different psychological and linguistic experiences that arise between low income students the color, there exists a need for studies to focus on specific groups of minority students to address these unique, cultural needs. This more focused attention can help us to develop more targeted and supportive techniques for teachers to implement that can increase the academic identity in specific populations such as that of the Latinx student.

Thirdly, although schools and staff may have the ability to address the racial needs of their students, these individuals may still be affected by heuristic biases. For example, Bancroft (2009) conducted a yearlong ethnographic study to understand how the rhetoric of high-achieving charter schools (who supposedly had agency to enact the

changes they desired) who served socioeconomically different populations addressed the needs of their students. When the researcher compared the experience of charter schools that served minority students (with Latinx students) and those that served White, middle-class students, a contrasting experience emerged between the principals at the predominantly White school and the principals at the school with predominant minority students. Specifically, when race and poverty were not as salient in the minds of the principal, the need for culturally sensitive practices was not reported; on the other hand, at low income schools principals appeared highly cognizant of the effects of poverty and race. The findings further the point that, although leaders in power may seek to change their areas for the better, even they may be unconsciously influenced by the demographics of the children they directly serve (i.e., White; of Color), which affects the decisions they make. In other words, that a school organization and the individuals who work there have the potential to affect change does not indicate that those agents will promote culture in a way that is positive for the Latinx who attend there. Finally, Athanases, Achinstein, Curry and Ogawa (2016) observed that Latinx students lagged behind their White, college-dominant counterparts in all core areas of academics: English, math, reading, and science, with others citing many students needing academic remediation in college. Although schools with a focused-approach may successfully help to increase the rate by which Latinx students attend college, the issue of college-readiness remains. In addition, even in some schools, teachers perceive an incongruence with the fit of their students and the school, and may fail to engage their Latinx students' sense of belongingness (Nichols, 2006).

The Importance of Latinx Parents

These previous studies suggest that, although the philosophical approach of schools and its implementation by teachers is important, it is helpful to examine how other agents in the lives of students contribute to their academic experience, at home. In light of the variable nature of school systems, their teachers, and their ability to affect the academic identity of Latinx students, the degree to which parental academic socialization practices can predict Latinx students' sense of belonging should also be analyzed. In a study where they examined more than 1,000 schools, Weiher and Tedin (2002) found that the decision to transfer their child from their local public school to purported high-achieving charter school was more likely to occur if said charter school had more same-race students in attendance. This finding highlights the impact that parents have for their Latinx children, especially in terms of selecting the school of choice, and applying for their child to gain entrance. Moreover, it points to the need to understand the role that parents play within highly driven Latinx families, and to investigate the thoughts and practices across Latinx parents. In addition, Garcia-Reid, Peterson, & Reid (2015) found that it was not only teacher support, but also parental support, that strongly predicted a student's avoidance of problem behavior, and increases in academic engagement. Finally, Whiting, Feinauer, and VanDerwerken (2012) documented the demographic differences and heterogeneity that exists within Latinx families, which authors use to highlight the need to understand how these differences affect educational and social practices—an idea that is supported by the findings in the next section.

LATINX FAMILIES, SOCIALIZATION, AND BELONGING

In order to understand how Latinx adolescents see themselves within their academic context academics, an exploration of how Latinx parents culturally and educationally socialize their children is needed, examining these socialization practices as

they occur throughout their children's lives. In addition, a general overview of the principles by which Latinx families govern their households will elucidate the valuations present in this population, and how parents teach their children about who their children are, academically. While I acknowledge that each family of Latinx descent is unique—that is, each family unit works within its own heterogeneous subculture and practices (Whiting, Feinauer, & VanDerwerken, 2012)—there are, on average, notable principles and beliefs that together create a common framework from which Latinx parents draw from to instruct their children and adolescents.

Latinx Family Values

Reviewed below are a number of important Latinx family values discussed extensively by Santiago-Rivera (2002). Central to Latinx family structure is the principle of *familismo,* previously defined as the deep sense of obligation and connection that Latinx children experience towards their parents. This idea of *familismo* is especially important in that it centralizes the notion of self within a communal experience, notable when one evaluates the factors related to self-efficacy, and the underlying motivations that drive Latinx adolescents academically. Interestingly, because aspects of familismo can fluctuate from generation to generation (Suizzo, 2014), and because familismo is related to parental socialization, the variable of parental generational status will be controlled for in this study.

Similarly related is the Latinx family value of *Personalismo,* defined as the high valuation of interpersonal relationships which carries a high emotional valence and contributes to the decisions Latinx individuals make. This value is seen in the role of the *compadre* and *comadre*—close friends of the parents selected at the religious baptism to assist in advising and gift giving as the Latinx child develops throughout later cultural-

religious markers (i.e., *Quinceaneras;* wedding ceremonies). Thus, from birth to adult maturation, the Latinx child finds themselves in a relationship that underscores a strong sense of community and an involvement of others in their wellbeing across the lifespan.

Couched within the Latinx family's interpersonal understanding of Personalismo are a number of sub-concepts, such as: *Respeto* (i.e., societal expectation that Latinx adolescents will defer to adults and individuals who authoritatively preside over them); and *Dignidad*/*Orgullo* (i.e., a sense of pride strongly connected to honor). Although most cultures view respect as necessary to maintain relationships, the Latinx family differs in that pride and dignity operate at a more core layer of the self (Santiago-Rivera, 2002). To return to my original question about academic identity: if, at first blush, Latinx family values seemingly encourage Latinx children to succeed academically and bring pride to the family by respecting their teachers, why then do Latinx children appear to lag behind other children? Indeed, as this review of core Latinx family values suggests, the achievement gap cannot be explained solely by a mismatch between Latinx family values and academics. I now discuss how Latinx parents discuss education with their children more generally, and implications for what these discussions mean about their collective identity.

Latinx Cultural Socialization and Academics

One of the unique dimensions of the Latinx experience is the interplay between acculturation and a sense of social belonging in the greater macrosystem itself. As previous research has demonstrated the impact of Latinx parental messages on their adolescents wellbeing, and since these parents' experiences are colored by the greater context in which they find themselves (i.e., implicit racism; language struggles; cultural adaptation) it is useful to understand how Latinx parents discuss their family's placement

within the larger American culture. Ultimately, understanding the dynamic between group relations and identity as mediated by parents will generate a more complete picture about the challenges that students from this culture-group face as they attempt to create a positive school identity. Moreover, this section aims to demonstrate how the school-related identity that predicts academic success is shaped by the *consejos* (advice/guidance) provided to them by their parents.

First, when one examines the many ways that Latinx parents talk to their children about race, culture, and ethnicity, the data suggest that the *kind* of messages provided to children can predict either positive or negative academic trajectories (Ceballo, Maurizi, Suarez, & Aretakis, 2013). Grindal and Niheri (2015) examined the interrelation of ethnic-racial socialization, ethnic identity, and academic performance in a sample of Latinx ninth grade adolescents. Researchers discovered that whenever parents spoke to their adolescents in a way that fostered distrust of other racial and ethnic groups, Latinx students were significantly less likely to achieve academically as measured by self-reported grades. In addition, results indicated that if, instead of disparaging out groups, Latinx parents promoted knowledge and pride about their family's ethnicity, Latinx adolescents were more likely to find academic success. Synthesizing these findings, one hypothesis is that while healthy social identity can serve as a predictor of Latinx success in schools, the mechanism through which Latinx students achieve said success is contingent on the kinds of in-group/out-group messages Latinx parents promote in the home, which can affect how Latinx students see themselves in the greater contexts in which they find themselves.

In addition to messages that communicate racial understandings about the self and the other, additional studies suggest that how Latinx parents frame the parent-child relationship, as well as their aspirations for their child, can affect how the child resolves

their sense of academic identity. For instance, in a qualitative study that interviewed Latinx adolescents on how they viewed their 'self' within environments and contexts, Maciel and Knudson-Martin (2014) found that Latinx adolescents with first generation parents reported an "identity bind" as a result of not feeling their societal place in either American culture or Mexican culture. These adolescents described having to select one of two major narratives: a) a *restricting* narrative characterized by parental messages of shame (i.e., "don't sacrifice my sacrifice) and school messages of being unworthy as part of an overarching discriminatory culture; or b) an *empowering* narrative characterized by parental messages that framed parental sacrifice as a tool through which children could reap their own rewards. Ultimately, Latinx adolescents reported that the empowering narratives fostered a sense of ethnic pride, an identity resolve, and a feeling of hope and optimism towards academic goals.

To recapitulate, Latinx parents socialize their children with values that can emphasize a positive identity within their own group while also not engendering mistrust of other groups and without a sense of guilt. Moreover, Latinx parents contribute to how their children view themselves, not only within the microsystem of family, but also within the macrosystem of the U.S., with all of its burgeoning cultures. Finally, the Latinx parent-child relationship itself serves as either a source of acculturative stress or as motivation for the Latinx child to work and, subsequently, succeed in their respective academic setting. In short, the Latinx-child relationship and the messages that emerge from the relationship take place within a cultural context, which affects the Latinx adolescent's construal of self in relation to others.

Latinx Academic Socialization

Although, as indicated in previous sections, values and cultural socialization have measured effects on Latinx students' self-perception, a third contributing factor is how Latinx parents talk about education and the value of the educational system itself (Durand, 2011). Indeed, the messages and ideas Latinx parents provide to their children predict how connected Latinx children will feel within their school setting. It is important, then, to understand the approach and content that Latinx parents utilize when they talk about education to their developing adolescents.

Valadez (2002) examined the parental factors that predicted Latinx adolescents' decisions to enroll in advanced math courses—an enrollment that reliably predicts positive outcomes in higher education. What researchers found was that Latinx parents' different forms of social capital (i.e., family interconnections), human capital (i.e., parental education degrees), and parental discussions, significantly and positively predicted Latinx children's enrollment in advanced math courses. The finding from this study suggests that the types of messages and ideas that Latinx parents communicate to their students can have measurable effects on the long- term academic choices their children make.

In addition to course selection, the degree to which Latinx parents emphasize the value of work *over* the value of learning and education can impact the long-term educational choices that the child makes (Rodriguez, Rhodes, and Aguirre, 2015). In addition to the ways in which parents communicate in the home, Latinx parents may also place certain logistical restrictions on the kinds of educational programs to which their children may apply. For example, in one study that sought to understand whether *familismo* predicted students' decisions to apply to local community colleges over four-year-universities, researchers found that although student-reported familismo did not

significantly relate to this decision, their parents' parental preferences did relate to their decision to live at home (Ovink & Kalogrides 2015). Again, this finding underscores the weight that Latinx parents have on the educational choices their children make.

Finally, a number of theorists (Coleman, 1988; Sewell and Hauser, 1980) have described how in addition to raw financial capital, parents contribute to their student's educational trajectory through the social and interpersonal provisions they provide for them. Moreover, researchers further describe how a parent's level of education can predict the level of expectations that parents will have for their children's academic attainment. Indeed, Sewell and Hauser (1980) describe that if either one of the child's parents have obtained a bachelor's degree, the student will have at minimum one parent-model to which aspire. Due, then, to the potential relationship between level of education and parental socialization, I controlled for parental level of education in the regression analysis.

Moreover, the field has produced a number equivocal results with how parental socialization works across gender, and how that comes to affect academics (Alfaro et al, 2006; Plunket et al, 2008; Taylor & Graham, 2007): while under some conditions, grade levels, and types of parental guidance, Latinx boys achieve more in the area of academics, the same can be said for Latinx girls. Given the potential confounding effects of gender on parental socialization, I also entered child gender as a control variable into the equation.

In closing, although the mythology of the Latinx parent as "educational agnostic" has previously been challenged, more studies are needed to clarify the relationship between the messages Latinx parents provide to their child and how Latinx adolescents orient themselves towards academics. Moreover, although Latinx families are invested in their children's education at various levels—having, at times, reported higher levels of

educational investment than White counterparts (Ryan, Casas, Kelly-Vance, Ryalls, & Nero, 2010)—further inquiry is needed to replicate studies that show how socialization practices relate to academic belonging. What this study sought to understand, then, is the extent to which academic socialization practices enacted by parents predicts a positive, meaningful sense of academic identity in Latinx students.

THE PRESENT STUDY

With the numerous difficulties experienced by Latinx students across their educational careers—barriers that occur at both the macro level (i.e., policy; culture) and micro level (i.e., classrooms)—it is important for professionals invested in education and psychology to understand how Latinx students develop their academic collective self. Key to this analysis is understanding how Latinx students view their relationships with the change-agents of the school—professionals with the power to promote change at the level of culture and the self, conveying messages that affect students' belonging and internalized values. In addition, given the strong family values inherent to the Latinx family, I would be remiss not to explore the predictive power of parental socialization messages for Latinx students during these formative years.

In order to explore these variables, the study grounds the process of *academic belonging* in the established literature and theory of collective identity, and the human need to feel a sense of social connectedness to others. This theory also aligns with more recent ideas that argue academic identity can be better understood when one includes a dimension of belonging or interdependence (Matthews 2014). Further, having understood the way in which *familismo*-oriented Latinx parents play an important role in building their children's sense of *Belonging* (Valdez, 2002), the study attempted to measure the extent to which parental academic socialization predicts Latinx children's sense of academic belonging. The study also measured Latinx students' report on the support they receive from teachers and its relationship to academic belonging.

This study is unique due to a number of reasons. Although studies similar to this one have measured academic identity and belonging with students of color and how this belonging relates to academic outcomes, this is the first study to also integrate parental

academic socialization into a conceptualization framework while concurrently considering teacher support, specifically for Latinx adolescents. In addition, this study will explore the different dimensions of parental socialization and consider how they each relate to children's sense of academic belonging. Finally, this study directly assesses how Latinx parents themselves socialize their children, providing much needed information about not just what the Latinx adolescent experiences in terms of academics, but the messages and techniques their parents report to use.

In addition to traditional measures of academic achievement such as grade point average and standardized tests, this study also sought to take into account other academic measures of outcomes and behavioral processes, for reasons that follow. First, the cultural construct of "Education" proper amongst Latinx people goes beyond the realm of objective grades, and into the social arena of the way one participates in the world, how well one engages one's moral obligations, and the respect one provide to others (Seligman and Peterson, 2004 ; Hill and Torres, 2010). Therefore, it appeared culturally proper to include more 'process' measures that could explain what homeroom teachers were observing in their Latinx students, informed by their day-to-day doings. In addition, researchers Angela Duckworth (2007) and Carol Dweck (2006) describe the importance of considering factors outside of what are seemingly "fixed" intellectual and academic quotients (i.e., IQ, GPA, SATs), and exploring abilities and mentalities that, too, contribute to longitudinal success. I sought to examine what variables might contribute to the achievement gap outside of solely GPA and standardized tests, and explored how feeling connected to a community could affect your observable actions in that space as a result of that connection.

From this literature review and framework, then, arises three hypotheses.

a) Latinx students are best served when the systems that govern their development are

working in tandem to increase their sense of collective identity. When teachers practice pedagogical caring, the students whom they serve are more likely to take on the values of the teacher and feel welcomed by the system the teacher represents (Noddings, 1992; Wentzel, 1997); this leads to a positive association with academic belonging. Moreover, the messages parents use to shape their children's identity affects how their children view themselves in relation to other groups (Jimenez-Silva, 2009). With these two processes in mind, I hypothesized that Parental Academic Socialization (PAS) and Teacher Support (TS) will together explain more of the variance in Belonging over that which can be explained by either only teacher-support or only PAS, all while controlling for the variables of grade level, parental level of education, child gender, child age, child bilingual ability, parental generational status, and acculturation (See Figure 1).

b) Second, as previously mentioned the school achievement gap affects Latinx students across a number of areas, not only in terms of test scores and grades, but also the behavioral processes that make up that achievement (Matthews, 2014). As such, although there may be an effect of parental socialization and teacher support on behavior directly, I hypothesize that academic belonging will significantly mediate the relationship between said teacher support and parental socialization, and behavioral outcomes (character traits, academic skills, intellectual habits) (See Figure 2).

c) Similarly, although there may be an effect of parental socialization and teacher support on academic outcomes directly, I hypothesize that academic achievement (i.e., end of year exams, grade point average) will be significantly mediated through the variable of academic belonging. The more an adolescent feels a sense of belonging to a system, the more likely they will be to do well globally and holistically. (See Figure 3).

Chapter 3: Ethnographic Impressions

Over the past four years I immersed myself in the culture, the homes, and the lives of the families in the study, while also frequenting the schools from which the participants were recruited. Although the study utilizes a quantitative methodology to explain the processes that might drive academic belonging and success—a cross-sectional snapshot—I provide additional context to detail my experience in working with the families in the study. While proper demographic information about the participants and methods will be provided in the next chapter, I thought it helpful to relate the subjective-observational experience that took place during the data-collection process. Ultimately, an account of the vulnerabilities and victories navigated by the Latinx families during the educational process, with insight into how the dual-systems work in tandem, highlights my positionality.

The Experience, the Struggle, a Sense of Resilience

At the start of each home visit, the family welcomed me into their home with warmth and candor, with gratitude and graciousness. House styles varied, and included: rural-areas with animals running around the yard (dogs, chickens, even geese on one occasion); small trailer parks with clutter and old furniture on the street corner; urban houses and apartments in historically low-income areas, with their own character and color. For instance, while some houses had easy and open parking on the street, other houses required a long drive into fields with unpaved roads in more rural areas. Also, there were often a handful of vehicles parked throughout the driveway, which at times prompted me to call the family as a I arrived to know where would be the best place to park. Some houses displayed dead weeds and unkempt shrubbery, dried from the Texas

summer heat; at other times I visited houses with trimmed roses and potted plants with great care.

I conducted the work either in the family's living room, or the dining room, creating a distance to provide a sense of privacy for each member of the parent-child dyad. The living room was typically adorned with pictures of family members across the walls, of different sizes and border styles, with religious iconography such as crosses, images of the virgin, and verses from the bible hanging from the walls. Natural light frequently invaded the research-spaces, with research taking place mostly during the early mornings or early afternoons on the weekends. Often, hues of varying browns, yellows, blended around the areas, with handmade, wooden artisanal objects adorned with plated bronze. Due to our routine arrival times, there was on occasion breakfast having just been cooked and eaten, or a hot lunch made ready on the stove, which filled the house with a warm, savory smell, adding a sense of intimacy and depth to the work. Indeed, in each home there was an ease and a sense of comfort between myself and the family, with a shared-language (perhaps, a shared-accent), creating a unity between the parties. Frequently, the parent offered me water or other beverages throughout his time there, checking in on his level of comfort near the midpoint of the data-gathering procedure.

As the survey procedure progressed, the families and I often grew immersed in the moment, taking time to ponder over their responses with diligence. Though the items in the questionnaire were typically close-ended, often asking the family about frequencies, mothers often wished to qualify a response and provide an example to clarify their meaning. For instance, with some of the older adolescents in the study, when asked about the frequency with which they encouraged their children to do their homework, mothers would often laugh, say, "Well, he doesn't really like me doing that anymore, but

I try to when I can." Notably, near the end of the hour-long research-session, when moving towards handing the family payment for participation, families appeared momentarily surprised: even when I had verbally reminded them of their payment at the start of each session, families seemed to have forgotten the monetary compensation involved in their participation. Having immersed themselves in the questions, in the rapport built between researcher and participant, in the thought-processes centered on their children's wellbeing, parents appeared to have reached the end of our time together with gratitude for the "asking" of their experience.

With the majority of the families with whom I worked living below the national poverty line (i.e., $30,000 for five-person household; Annual Update, 2020), the challenges inherent in seeking an education were apparent within homes. One striking example of this came early on during the study, with a 5-person-family living in a small studio apartment, with no visible wall of separation between sleeping area, living room, or kitchen. However, the family managed to erect a dividing plastic curtain to give their 13-year-old adolescent the *sense* of separation and privacy. Adaptation and accommodation were necessary—an attempt to provide their adolescent child with the experience of having his own space. I wondered, given the small space of the dining and living room areas, about the logistical challenges that entailed daily academic tasks, such as homework completion for the Latinx teenager while having to avoid distracting noises of younger siblings. Indeed, during this session (and frequently among others) it was the case that while the parent-child dyad completed forms, there were other younger siblings enjoying cartoons, playing videogames, or building loudly with construction block and action-figures. As a solution, a majority of the parents worked with effort to redirect their children to less noisy games, or left them to the charge of another family member. Here I was made privy to the ways in which students and parents problem-solved the challenges

inherent in small living spaces. I learned that creativity was key, and flexibility was a tool regularly needing employment as family members, together, worked to adapt to the reality in which they found themselves.

In addition to the struggles that affected the families economically, mothers mentioned other barriers that created stress for the families throughout the period of 4 years, including anxiety around immigration issues. Indeed, the fear of deportation loomed large and worrisome for some families, an effect of the macro-systems at large. Around the year 2017, families began to share an increased sense of terror and worry concerning the national conversation around immigrants, their place in the American working landscape, and messages that their children were internalizing. Concerns about family separation, about losing the life they had grown from the ground, and uncertainty about what the future would hold for them entered gently into rapport-building-conversations, with me gaining greater understanding of their plights. On one occasion a mother worried that her child would arrive home one day, find her no longer there, wondering what her child's life would become. As resourceful and mindful as these families were, fully committed to the wellbeing of their children, there lay structures and systems outside their control, leaving them with the residual, emotional mystery of what tomorrow held.

Amidst vocalized moments in which parent and adolescent shared their struggle, their most pressing anxieties, parents still regularly demonstrated a desire to support their children, asking me for mental health resources and even on occasion communicating with him at later points how the visits had helped unearth an emotional and/or academic need for the family. As for the adolescent participants, as would be expected for their age-group, some responded quite vocally and transparently to the items in this study, while others showed more of a shy and conservative demeanor—quiet, yet still working

diligently to answer the questions. Through this detailed and important process, each home revealed unique and resilient strengths, homes brimming with life, loudness, and electric connection.

Parenting and Academic Engagement

A handful of moments elucidate how Latinx families help engage their children in the challenges around them, and try to better understand the processes that drive their children. One instance of this occurred when a research session was conducted at a rural home outside the city proper. At this point in the year, the summer had reached a point of climactic heat, with the sun beating down intensely on me and the other graduate assistant. When the team arrived at the home, the family was in the middle of a home renovation for their trailer and building new rooms. I was first struck by the commitment of these families to the study; rather than cancel their appointment with me, the family created space for graduate students to visit and conduct the study. In order to administer the measures in a place of relative quiet, I and the 12-year-old adolescent worked in the very room being renovated, split open the down middle, feeling the intense heat from the outside which entered the non-ventilated area and trapped itself inside. Still, the adolescent persisted, answering each item, even taking the time to describe her own educational experiences as needed, stating that she enjoyed learning at her school.

Although this family was unique to others in that they owned their own property and land, they had socialized their child with the same determination of other parents who lived in the city, namely, teaching her to follow-through on a commitment made to representatives of the academic community. Adaptability to the environment, persistence, and strong ‘character’ (described in further detail under Measures) came to the fore through this family’s tenacity and life. This image tells a story: an adolescent working

through challenges, while parents construct a home around them, breathing life and desire into their child's future, prompting them to engage in diligence and hard work.

Across the home visits, when engaging in questions around academic achievement and support, parents strongly verbalized their desire and commitment to see their children find success in the academic world. When asking questions about the frequency with which they provided socialization to their children, parents' affect remained consistent, describing their verbalizations around education, and stating the high premium they placed on their children finding success in this domain. In their responses there was a strong sentiment and weight carried, as if "academic socializer" had become a part of their own identity. For some parents, even basic questions concerning whether their children had a designated homework space or the extent to which they checked in about school were responded to with tones that sounded deeply personal—even defensive—as if academic inculcation was a 'given.' Mother's pitches when endorsing "Frequently" and "Very Frequently" consistently conveyed an underlying sentiment of "Of course!" and "This is definitely true for me"—a quick responsiveness that intimated a sense of responsibility for this dimension of their child's life. Through this parent-report process, I came to grow aware of their perspective, of the subjective experience that the majority of Latinx parents in the study carried with them: that they had worked with diligence and constancy to make sure the message of educational importance rang voluminous and unpolluted to their growing adolescents and scholars.

In terms of what Latinx parents thought about other Latinx parents at their school, and the academic socialization provided to their respective children, there was a mixed sense of efficacy. Strikingly on some occasions, Latinx parents reported a laissez faire attitude they sometimes observed, namely, that certain parents saw the secondary school

as a “drop off” location, less than willing to actually invest time and energy in their children’s lives. Furthermore, on another notable occasion, a Latinx mother criticized the effects of ‘latch-key’ parenting, in which children were not being socialized well at home, with mothers working instead of staying at home and caring for the wellbeing and educational upbringing of their children. In other words, at times parents criticized other parents for the behavioral and educational problems that manifested in Latinx youth. In sum, I observed Latinx parents putting forth tremendous efforts at increasing their children’s educational achievement, with parents themselves demonstrate a somewhat unexpected level of intensity with being the ideal, education-socializing type of mother or father.

School Responses and Relational Effects

With Latinx parents in this sample demonstrating a drive and determination to create a pathway of success for their children, parents’ perspectives on their school’s strengths and weaknesses provided helpful understanding. In terms of the general academic supports and education provided, parents seemed grateful for the structures in place, the uniform codes implemented, and the academic environment where they reported their children did well. However, when shortcomings were vocalized, a reoccurring theme arose around the provision of emotional support. For instance, the mother of one 13-year-old participant who struggled with emotional issues and suicidal ideation communicated having felt the school had not effectively fostered sufficient trust with her son, citing a revolving door of counselors throughout the years, underscoring her felt sense of relational inconsistency. For her, quality of support was deeply connected to the personalismo experienced through the agent of change at her son’s school: the school counselor. For me, this exemplifies that while the quality of education is important for

Latinx families, there is a parallel desire for healthy, emotional support to also come forth. In other words, Latinx parents value high educational requirements with concurrent high supports.

Another mother communicated a disconnect between she and the school system when discussing the kinds of special education services her 11-year-old child was set to receive for his diagnosis of Attention-Deficit Hyperactive Disorder. Specifically, the mother described not understanding in what way her son depicted the "inattentive" component of the diagnostic nomenclature, with her son seeming to process information well, able to focus, and track ideas as they were presented to him. Here, I (with clinical training) helped to clarify the nature of the diagnosis (i.e., children are sometimes diagnosed with predominantly-hyperactive-type), and provided an active listening ear as she discussed the grief in accepting her child was neurological-atypicality. As I spent time hearing the mother process aloud about her son's current functioning, I noted a pull to step into a more counselor-like space, with an interpersonal collaborative need needing to be met. Here, he wondered, of all the agents who represented the academic collective, why would the mother open up to him, rather than talk through these issues with the evaluators or teachers during the school meeting? In other words, what relational-component had been absent from the evaluation process which would have provided her the necessary information and pathway by which to grapple with her tensions, and secure a stronger connection with her son's school. Here again, an example of a school that provided an important and beneficial service, with helpful information for this Latinx family; yet, a Latinx family walking away from an academic meeting without concurrent moment of relief from the complicated emotions that appeared to arise.

On a third occasion, during the home visit a mother began to speak at length in regards to the amount of homework and tasks being assigned to her 14-year-old son,

worried about the way it came to affect his social relationships and his ability to make friends. During the meeting, the mother discussed her son's personality style and his difficulty with speaking up in class, remarking that his quiet nature was not always rewarded by his teacher. At the same time, the overwhelming amount of academic work required by the school each day left little time to target social skills and communication processes of which her son may have benefited from in the long run. Indeed, this mother went so far to openly speak about transferring her son to a different school, one whose underlying framework made space for her socially-atypical child. Following-up with the mother months later after the data-collection-session, the mother reported she had indeed transferred her son out of his system of education, wanting him to feel located in a setting where he could "fit." Ultimately, parents provided helpful intimations where areas of growth could take place—pockets of fertile soil where they felt the seeds of change needed to be sown which could erupt in stronger relationships and buttress the social dimensions of their child's academic engagement.

In regards to the student-school relationship as experienced by the child participant, many of the Latinx adolescents with whom I interacted verbalized a sense of appreciation, even enjoyment for their schools, stating overall support from their teachers. When asked about their perspective on the kinds of school supports, there was a mildness in their affect, though it is difficult to identify whether this was due to their developmental stage of adolescence, or whether a lack of emotional affect existed for their schools. At times, students also verbalized a strictness and rigidity about certain aspects of the school structure, hoping for more extracurricular academic activities, and describing a feeling of "pushing," of "demanding," on them. In other words, while there was an overall sense of gratitude for their schools, these individuals were also entering an age where they were verbalizing that what the academic environment demanded of them,

seemed out of reach or perhaps not always interesting. This disconnect was subtle and difficult to capture, yet I could not escape the feeling that at small intervals the youth in the study were putting forth effort into their academics due to the "rules in place," rather than a nurtured, interpersonal curiosity and connection to the curriculum.

Summation of Experiences

Altogether, the examples offered here indicate the dynamic and varying interactions that compose the complex nature of educational pursuit within the Latinx-family unit. First, we see a family system that puts in large amounts of effort and energy to inculcate academic ideals into their children, working hard to understand the emotional and social intrapersonal workings of their daughters and sons to better support them. These parents demonstrated, on average, determination and investment in their students' academic wellbeing, seeking to gain recommendations and ways of better attuning to their child's needs. In addition, some parents voiced criticism of other Latinx parents who they felt did not work with as much effort as they did to ensure their respective children excelled academically and morally. For these parents, the type of schools where their children attended offered a greater opportunity to find success in this country, an assent and belief in the meritocracy of hard work, and gratitude for the options offered. To say that the Latinx families in this sample were educationally-inclined would be an understatement; to instead say they were driven, competitive, and desired a higher quality of life via educational attainment for their children would better approximate truth.

Secondly, there appears to be a sense of general contentment with the type of instruction that takes place in the academic systems where children are currently engaged, both in regards to the child and parent perspective. Overall, parents remarked agreeing with the highly-structured didactics, high standards of expectations, and

describing a systemic alignment with their own parenting philosophy (i.e., clear rules and expectations). There were, however, instances where families intimated disconnect between the services provided by their systems of education and what they as parents hoped. The strengths of the school (the high-expectations and structure) could become a double-edged-sword, with some families voicing a question of whether to transition to another school that imposed less stress. This kind of complication typically was accompanied by the narrative of a family who seemed to struggle outside the school's system of support: whether this was a parent's personal challenge with processing a special education categorization; a mother describing the relational inconsistency of the counseling work; or a parent describing the social anxiety experienced by her child in the academic setting.

The picture this paints is one of a school system that provides high-standards of learning for the students in their care, a sample of parents who—in spite of the economic and emotional turmoil—work tirelessly to create educational environments for their children; and something amiss. Often, an illusiveness remained around keys that could lead a Latinx family to have a greater sense of communion with their academic community. It is in fact this very gap that I seek to better understand.

Upon reflection over the previous four years, I feel astounding gratitude for the determination that our Latinx families had in this study. These families, mostly working class, first and second generation, carefully provided opportunities for me to come to their homes, stores, and even restaurants. On certain administrations, families would seek to answer questions while making food for their customers, bussing tables, taking orders, and then returning to the assessment to report on their children's educational experiences and their own practices. In these moments, researcher, mother, and child, together collaborated to document their lived experiences, to contribute numbers and figures, and

to name the processes that occurred at home, at school, and inside themselves. Having come from similar home experiences (elder son of first-generation Mexican parents), I observed parallels between my own life and these families, taking a step back in time into this new experiential and liminal space, considering the tools and thought-processes my own parents had gifted me, grateful to be a part of it all. My position is trifold in which I observe: a) the tremendous efforts these families exhibit towards their children's schooling; b) the attempts by the school systems involved in the study to equalize the academic gap; c) challenging instances where the forces that drive these gaps are difficult to name, calling for a granular approach that weighs out the various elements involved in helping a child know that she, academically, belongs.

Chapter 4: Methods

PARTICIPANTS

Participants are 61 adolescents between the ages of 10 and 15 years old, and their parent/caregivers, from five different schools that implement a standardized curriculum, teaching philosophy, and form of documenting academic success. The target sample size was selected due to the requirements of the grant that funds the study, with the option to review the progress and recruit additional families as needed. Eligibility for participation in the proposed study includes: a) the child being 10 to 15 years old at time of original recruitment; b) identified as Latino/a by their parent; c) to have a parent or legal guardian over 18-years-old who participates in the study for certain measures related to the bilingualism segment of the study: and d) to be able to speak English and Spanish. Graduate students screened the parents at different points during the procedure (i.e., initial recruitment; follow-up phone call) and verified eligibility.

Based on the requirements of this study, 100% of the participants identified in some form as Latinx, with a majority (95%) who identified as Mexican-American, 5% identified as Central American. In terms of generational status, the majority of parents reported being first-generation immigrants. On average, families in our study earned annual household incomes of $20,000 to $30,000. The majority of parents identified as women (98.4%), and the sample was divided evenly for adolescents in terms of gender-identification (49.2% female). The majority of parents reported being first generation immigrants (90.2%) and all parents identified as Hispanic/Latinx (100%). Average years of education for parents was 10.66 (SD=3.52). The average grade level for adolescents was seventh grade (SD=1.01) and the average age was 12 (SD=1.13). On a measure of linguistic deficits in English and Spanish (ITALK), adolescents scored an average of 4.56 in English and 4.17 for Spanish (range of 1-5, higher numbers indicating better mastery

of language). On a measure of acculturation (AHIMSA), an experience of *integration* was the highest rated response for this sample (*M*=4.8, SD=1.97). This suggests that, for this sample, adolescents felt a similar level of connection to their parents' Latinx culture of origin as they did to the United States; individuals with this kind of integrated cultural identity typically feel knowledgeable about dual cultures, a bicultural efficiency with which to navigate dual cultural norms, and a positive attitude towards both the host country and origin country (FramBoise, Coleman, Gerton, 1993).

I had previously provided educational workshops on diversity training for teachers and staff at one of the schools, and maintained a professional relationship with administrators at the school sites. Based on the screening criteria of the bilingualism study, 100% of the students answered the questionnaires in English.

PROCEDURES

Recruitment

I recruited participants from a local charter branch with various sites located across a city in the Central Texas area. Graduate research assistants visited four different campuses and informed potential participants about the larger study from which this smaller study is a subset of: a three-part, longitudinal study on bilingualism, mental health, and how Latinx parents help their children to cope with stress (i.e., purpose, description of study, monetary incentive, length of study, etc.). After the announcement, I sent recruitment forms home with the students, with interested participants returning the form with signatures from their parents. Graduate students contacted interested parents by phone to ask criteria questions about age, ethnic identity, and parent's age/guardianship. If participants were eligible for the study, I conducted home visits with another graduate assistant: one of us worked with the parent and another worked with the student. Each

session of the study consisted of questionnaires, working-memory tasks, and/or storytelling tasks that assessed levels of bilingualism, executive functioning, mental health, response to stress, how parents socialized their children to cope with stressors, and other related processes. The first session lasted, on average, about 3 and ½, hours, the second session lasted about 1 and ½ hours, and the final session lasted ½ an hour. The second visit occurred six months after the first session, and the third visit occurred 6 months after the second visit.

In terms of the additional session of this specific study, a majority of the Latinx families have personally been met with through process described above, and have remained in contact through a series of mailed newsletters. Upon first round of contacts, participants signed a consent form that informed them that we would contact them in the future for more studies, with no obligation to participate in the future.

I recruited in two different ways. First, contact by telephone was made with the families who had previously given their consent and participated in the bilingualism part of the study, having explained the new questionnaires and purpose of the study, requesting interest in participation. Second, graduate students visited the home of families as part of the previously described bilingualism study. Graduate students explained the nature of the questionnaires included in the protocol, and confirmed the family's continued interest in participation. In sum, the segments took place as either questionnaires during the larger study on bilingualism, mental health, and coping with stress, or asked over the phone as a follow-up. If the phone method was used to collect additional date, the only data used from the first sessions related to stable data such as demographic or linguistic variables that remained constant regardless of amount of time passed (i.e., parental educational attainment, gender, generational status). The phone calls occurred 12-18 months after the aforementioned stable variables were collected. Given

the lapse in time from the original three sessions, students' grade level was recollected, given its potential to confound the outcome of academic identity (Eccles 2009).

Data Collection

I contacted participants either over the phone or in person. I read the questionnaires in their entirety. I read at a pace that was brisk, yet allowed the participant sufficient time to carefully consider the items. I randomized the sequence of the three main questionnaires to reduce any type of priming effect across the participants. After questionnaires were read, I thanked the participants for their participation and let them know I would value follow-up with them with the results, should these be of interest to them.

MEASURES

Academic Belonging

I used the Identification with School Questionnaire (ISQ; Voelkl, 1997) to examine how Latinx students view themselves in relation to academics in terms of belonging and sense of connection. Participants are asked to respond using a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree) to a total of 16-questions. Although the scale originally contained two-subscales that measured both a sense of belonging as well as conscious values of academics, one factor analysis revealed that scale worked just as well as a unidimensional instrument that measures identification with school as a construct composed of questions about social belonging (i.e., "I feel proud of being part of my school"; "People at school are interested in what I have to say"), and attitudes about school related outcomes (i.e., "School is one of the most important things in my life"). Internal consistency is .81 and has been validated with ethnic minority youth, including Latinx adolescents.

Parental Academic Socialization

I used the Parental Academic Socialization Questionnaire (PASQ, Suizzo and Soon, 2006) to measure parent-reported level of parental socialization. It has been validated with both younger and older populations. The scale has a five-point-range that asks about the frequency of certain parental behaviors from *never* to *very often.* The questionnaire contains three subscales: 1) *encouraging emotional autonomy* (i.e., "I encourage my child to problem solve issues with teacher before asking me"; alpha = .91; 11 items); 2) *communicating messages about the importance of hard work* (i.e., "I explain to my child that effort is the key to success; i.e., alpha = .90, 8 items); 3) *communicating messages about the importance of school success* (i.e., "I expect my child to get good grades in school"; alpha = .86, 10 items). The measure is made up of a total of 29 items.

Teacher Support

I used the Teacher Social and Academic support subscales of the Classroom Life Measure (Johnson, Johnson, Buckman, & Ruchards, 1985) to measure teacher academic support, specifically taking into consideration the aforementioned concept of pedagogical caring. The subscales have a five-point-range and ask about perceived support for learning from never to always. A sample item of the 4-item Social Support Scale is "My teacher really cares about me." A sample item of the 4-item Academic Support Scale is "My teacher cares about how much I learn." Students were instructed to answer the items with their teachers in general in mind, rather than with a specific teacher. Prior studies have reported Cronbach's alphas at .89 and .91. Due to the scores previously being found to be highly correlative, a single score composed of both types of items was utilized (Wentzel, 1997).

Academic Achievement

I used GPA as reported in school records to assess academic achievement. I used students' cumulative GPA, a score which takes into account all the grades that the student has obtained up until that point in their academic career. Given the stable nature of collective identity, Cumulative GPA is ideal as a way to capture the long term dynamic process that results in said score. In addition, I also used end of year (EOY) standardized-testing data as a measure of achievement in the areas of reading and mathematics (Standardized Tests of Academic Readiness). Due to measuring across grade levels which produce different standardized scores, I utilized percentile ranks to provide a sense of how these students compared to their same-grade cohort across their state.

Academic Process Behaviors

I used teacher-report of student behaviors as reported at the end of each quarter to assess Latinx students' behavioral and emotional engagement at school. At the end of each grading period, teachers report on students' mastery of academic skills (i.e., obtaining all A's in classes, passing/failing), character traits (i.e., respect for others; integrity during difficult situations; ethical action), and intellectual habits (i.e., focus; follow-through; initiative; task-completion). Each of the three dimensions is rated on a 3-point-scale of Needs Improvement (NI), Satisfactory (S), or Excellent (E). Teachers rate their students holistically, taking their overall efforts into consideration when assigning a score across the 3-dimensions, though, each dimension is conceptually distinct from each other and not intended to contribute to any composite measure. As per the administrator, schools provide routine checks and meetings to help teachers best understand how to score their students, with their scores routinely checked by other staff. Each dimension is discussed below.

In regards to academic skills, teachers reported one score with the following: Needs improvement (NI; failing a class), Satisfactory (S; passing all classes), or Excellent (E; Obtaining all A's). Examining Academic Skills provides another unit of success distinct from mere achievement, looking at student engagement on more of a criterion-level, affected by outliers in a different way than GPA. Conceptually, schools use this single-item as a discrete variable to distinguish students who are failing, passing all classes, and obtaining all A's, which can be helpful in terms of targeting interventions for different types of students (those who always fail classes compared to those who consistently excel). Having provided their single-item rating, teachers typically provide additional information about what this score might predict for this particular student, personalizing the response to other academic behaviors they foresee ("e.g., will not be on track to pass STAAR exams in some classes"; "earned high-school credit for math"; "is mastering skills in most classes").

Character Traits as conceptualized by the schools and informed by the work of Seligman and Peterson (2004) consists of a number of principles related to humanity, justice, and temperance towards others. For these schools, academic success means not only receiving a letter at the end of a grading period, but a dynamic assessment of how you engage your community. Character Traits, as defined by a top level administrator for the five schools, are: "traits related to integrity, trustworthiness, and doing the right things when no one is looking. These are written on our walls, practiced in our classroom. How the student is engaging their academic community." (Rodgers, principal, conversation). Teachers provide one response at the end of the grading period to identify whether a student needs improvement, is engaging in a satisfactory way, or exceeding expectations for his grade level, along with a small sentence to communicate why they assigned this score (e.g., "Often helps classroom teachers"; "Treats others with respect.")

In terms of Intellectual Habits, the administrator defined these as "the skills needed to be successful beyond school, in college, and in life. How to be a good worker." Intellectual Habits defined here echoes the work of Angela Duckworth (2007), with regard to concepts such as grit and self-control, the ability to persevere in the fiery crucible, conceptualized by authors as a proxy for executive functioning, i.e., process such as sustained motivation, impulse control, and metacognition (Tough, 2012). Similar to Character Traits, teachers at the end of the grading period assign a single-score to their students (N, SI, or E) to communicate to parents the kinds of intellectual habits their children have been engaged in (e.g., "consistently completes assignments"; "works to the best of his ability"; "remembering to turn in homework"). In line with the desires of Latinx families for their children to experience lifelong success (both now and as adults), Intellectual Habits was included as a way of assessing for these types of behaviors and rituals which may lead to success for Latinx children long after their graduation date.

Demographics

I used a demographic form that asks questions about age, gender, grade level, ethnicity/race, parental generational status, household level of income, and parents' previous educational attainment. I controlled for the previously mentioned variables during the analysis in order to more closely examine the relationship between parental socialization, teacher support, and academic identity.

Acculturation

Although child generational status was not collected for adolescents, acculturation was measured using the Acculturation, Habits, and Interests Multicultural Scale for Adolescents (AHIMSA; Unger et al., 2002; Cronbach's alpha = .65). This measure utilizes 8-items that assess for different aspects of acculturation ("My favorite music is

from"; "The way I do things and the way I think about things are from"). Four different subscales are generated based on their answers, including Integration ("Both"), Assimilation ("The United States"), Separation ("The country my family is from"), and Marginalization ("Neither").

Language Development

Relative use, speech, and language development of both English and Spanish were measured using the Inventory To Assesses Language Knowledge (ITALK; Peña et al., 2018; internal reliability = .88 -.96), a parent-report measure that examines children's level of vocabulary, grammar, sentence production, comprehension, and phonology. The measure is composed of 5 items (e.g., "How much Spanish/English vocabulary does the child use from the words she/he learns from school and home"), with a range of 1 to 5 (1 = less proficiency). Average means for each language are reported.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Hypotheses

1. Parental academic socialization (PAS) and Teacher Support will be related to academic belonging even after I control for the effects of adolescent gender, grade level, parental generational status, English and Spanish linguistic ability, acculturation, and parents' previous educational attainment. Additionally, the combination of parental academic socialization with that of teacher support will explain more of the variance on teacher-reported-behavior through the variable of academic belonging other than teacher support alone or parental socialization alone.
2. There will be a significant indirect effect of PAS and a significant indirect effect of Teacher Support on academic achievement (i.e., end-of-year exams, grade-point-average mediated through belonging).

3. There will be a significant indirect effect of PAS and a significant indirect effect of Teacher Support on academic behaviors (character traits, intellectual habits, academic skills) mediated through belonging.

Preliminary Analyses, Correlations, and Regression Analyses

Descriptive statistics were calculated (means and standard deviations) for the three main measures, along with checking assumptions for the correlational and regression analysis, and the data for outliers to assess normality. Specifically, scatterplots were used to assess linearity. Residual plots were used to examine any violations of normality and homoscedasticity. In addition, I tested the data for multicollinearity, with no concerns arising (Variance Inflation Factor >2, i.e., low variance increased due to collinearity).

First I ran descriptive analysis in the form of correlations between academic belonging, parental academic socialization, teacher support, GPA, and behavioral reports to determine whether certain predictor variables (i.e., sources of support/socialization from adults in Latinx students' lives, gender), demographic variables (i.e., income, gender, generational status) the mediator (i.e., belonging) and outcome variables (GPA; behavioral reports; EOY exams) were related in this sample.

Then, to examine the predictive power of parental socialization and teacher support on academic belonging while controlling for relevant demographic variables, I ran a regression model in three steps. In step 1, I regressed Academic Belonging on all the control variables (i.e., parental level of education, gender, grade level, generational status, English and Spanish linguistic ability, and level of acculturation). In step 2, I added PAS to the list of predictors while I controlled for all variables. Then in step 3, I added Teacher Support as a predictor variable to the analysis. To assess whether the

combination of parental socialization and teacher support explained the variance in academic belonging over that of only one source of support, I both compared the change in R^2 from step 1 to step 2, and then step 2 to step 3. Significant change (or lack thereof) would suggest that Latinx students' sense of academic belonging is best predicted by the actions manifested by teachers and parents, even when accounting for their age, their gender, the level of education that their parents received, the child's linguistic ability, the income in the home, and parents' generational status.

Next I used conditional mediation models—specifically, the Hayes' PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes 2013)—to study the effect of parental socialization and teacher support on GPA, EOY exams, and teacher-reported behaviors, all while controlling for relevant demographic variables. I examined the direct effects and indirect effects mediated by academic belonging, and report on the significance of the model itself. Due to the relatively small sample size and subsequent power, a structural equational modeling analysis would likely fail to capture the processes taking place. In addition, due to the cross-sectional nature of this study, and given that there was no randomization process to eliminate error, I will not discuss the results in terms of causal mechanisms. I utilized Hayes' process analysis to explore Academic Belonging as a potential mechanism that might explain the relationships between variables, theoretically. Hayes' PROCESS utilizes a bias-corrected-bootstrapping procedure that involves random sampling and makes no assumptions regarding the shape of the distribution. PROCESS provides the researcher with an estimate of the direct effect of an independent on dependent variable, and the indirect effect of an independent on dependent variable through a mediator. PROCESS outputs a 95% confidence interval, which is considered significant at 0.05 level when it does not cross zero.

First, I estimated the total effects of parental socialization on GPA, teacher-reported behaviors, and EOY exams. This was followed by estimating the direct effect of PAS on outcome variables. The final step was to examine the significance of indirect effects, to see if academic belonging is mediating the relationship between parental socialization on GPA and teacher support on GPA. Although the PASQ is composed of three subscales, I was interested in understanding how the composite effect of parental academic socialization (messages of hard work, valuing education, and emotional autonomy) interacted with belonging, since I had already utilized the complete scale in the step-wise regression. Next, I estimated the total effects of Teacher Support on GPA, teacher-reported behavior, and EOY Exams and the direct effect of teacher support on the same. This was followed by estimating the indirect effect of Teacher Support on outcome variables through academic belonging.

Because data were collected from different schools, there was the possibility that different schools would have different teacher effects. I calculated a One-Way ANOVA to see if there was any between-school variance for Teacher Support, with evidence for null hypothesis of effects of schools on amount of Teacher Support ($F = 2.2$, $p > .05$).

Bonferroni Correction

Due to testing 3 different kinds of outcomes during the PROCESS analysis for each predictor (EOY exams, GPA, academic behaviors), I used a Bonferroni correction to reduce the probability of committing a Type-1 error. Whenever multiple hypotheses are tested, the probability of a significant result increases with each test. In order, then, to control for error rate, the Bonferroni procedure calculated a new pair-wise alpha to keep the family-wise alpha at 0.05. The following equation was used: *0.05 / 3 = .0175*

Power Analysis

I conducted a power analysis using G* Power software to determine the number of participants required to detect significant results. A power analysis for finding a significant R^2 change requires 55 participants to obtain a moderate effect size ($f^2 = 0.26$) at a 0.80 level of power and an alpha of 0.0125 with 2 predictor variables, and 7 control variables. The effect size used here was modeled after a similar study that worked with a similar age population, a group of Latinx adolescent students, also interested in parental socialization and psycho-educational variables related to academic identity (Ceballo, Maurizi, Suarez & Aretakis, 2013).

I also conducted a power analysis to determine the number of participants required to detect significant results for hypotheses that used correlational analysis. A power analysis for finding a significant correlation requires 61 participants to obtain a one-tailed correlation of 0.36 at a 0.78 level of power and an alpha of 0.0175. The correlation size here was modeled after the study mentioned above.

Chapter 5: Results

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis (Table 2) display the mean and standard deviation of the variables of the study. Latinx parents in our sample reported an average parental academic socialization score of 4.39 (SD=.49), endorsing they *Frequently* support their children's emotional autonomy, communicate the value of education, and pass on messages about hard work. In terms of Teacher Support, adolescents report an average of 4.219 (SD= 0.58), endorsing they *Almost Always* feel emotional and academic support on behalf of their teachers. For Academic Belonging, students report an average of 3.07 (SD=0.32), endorsing they, on average, *Agree* with statements about school identification. Average cumulative GPA for students was 2.74 (SD=.80). Regarding teacher-reported behaviors, average Character Traits was 1.36 (SD = .56), and average Intellectual Habits was 1.11 (SD=.70), which indicates the sample, on average, *Met Expectations* of teachers; for Academic Skills, the sample scored an average of .79 (SD=.63) , which indicated teachers did not feel they had *Met Expectations* (i.e., were not all passing their classes).

Correlational Analysis

I examined the relationships between variables of interest and demographic variables using bivariate correlations (Table 3). First, demographic variables of interest yielded the following significant relationships. Level of income positively correlated with Parental Academic Socialization (r =.214, p<.05), Academic Skills (r =.252, p<.05), EOY Reading Scores (r =.264, p<.05), EOY Math Scores (r -=.304, p=.01), and Cumulative GPA (r =.277, p<.05). Increase in Parent-Generational Status (i.e., from first generation

to second generation, etc.) positively correlated with child Academic Skills (r=.241, p<.05). English linguistic ability was positively correlated with Academic Skills (r =.355, p<.01), Character Traits (r =.251, p<.05), Intellectual Habits (r =.439, p<.01), EOY Math (r =.28, p<.05), EOY Reading (r =.24, p<.05), and Cumulative GPA (r =.295, p<.05). Spanish linguistic ability was positively correlated with Intellectual Habits (r =.275, p<.05). In addition, I conducted an independent-samples t-test for gender-identification on outcome variables, with female-identification being significant for cumulative GPA (t =-2.1, p <.05), Character Traits (t=-2.2, p<.05), and Intellectual Habits (t=-3.5, p <.01), though no significance with the primary variables of interest in this study was found (Academic Belonging, Teacher Support, PAS).

Next, predictor variables yielded the following significant relationships (Table 4). First, Parental Academic Socialization (PAS) positively correlated with English Linguistic Ability (r =.30, p<.01) and negatively correlated with grade level (r =-.233, p<.05). PAS also positively correlated with fellow predictor variable Teacher Support (r =.280, p<.05), as well as the mediator, Academic Belonging (r =.219, p<.05). Interestingly, when the overall PAS scale was divided into its three subscales (i.e., value of education; emotional autonomy; hard work) only messages of hard work remained significantly correlated with Academic Belonging (r =.266, p <.05), though, messages of Emotional Autonomy approached significance (r =.21, p=.053). Teacher Support negatively correlated with Academic Skills (r =-.227, p<.05) and Character Traits (r =-.254, p<.05), and positively correlated with the mediator, Academic Belonging (r =.449, p<.01).

I also conducted correlational analysis between Academic Belonging and outcome variables (GPA, Intellectual Habits, Character Traits, Academic Skills, EOY Math, EOY Reading). Academic Belonging in Latinx students' significantly and

positively correlated with the following outcome variables: EOY Math (r = .24, p <.05), Character Traits (r = .24, p < .05), and there was a trend for EOY Reading (r =.21, p =.058) with no other significant correlations.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

In order to determine whether parental academic socialization and/or teacher support significantly predicted academic belonging, I utilized a step-wise regression (Figure 4). At step 1, the following variables were not found to be individually significantly predictive of academic belonging: parental level of education, income, adolescent gender, child's linguistic ability in English or Spanish, acculturation, nor parental generational status. However, grade level was found to be significantly and negatively related to academic belonging (t= -2.6, p = .013). At step 2, I entered parental academic socialization, which neither individually contributed to changes in academic belonging (t=1.84, p=0.07), nor better predicted the change in R-squared for the model (ΔR^2 =.052, p=.071). At step 3, I entered teacher support, which both individually contributed to the change in academic belonging (t=2.71, p=.009,), and also a significant change in R-squared for the model (ΔR^2 =.10, p=.009) (Tables 5). At step 3, grade level no longer reached significance (t= -1.8, p =.08) (Table 6).

To test hypothesis 2 and 3, I conducted a number of regressions to examine direct and indirect effects to investigate: a) the direct effects of the main predictors of parental socialization and teacher support on cumulative grade-point-average, end-of-year exams, and behavioral reports; b) the indirect effects between predictor variables and outcomes through the mediator, Academic Belonging. Of the original 61 participants, the schools were unable to provide information regarding EOY exams for 3 participants, and unable to provide information regarding teacher-reported-behaviors for 1. These cases were

excluded from the final analysis. Results are described below, first for teacher support, and then for parental academic socialization.

Teacher Support and Outcomes

Six separate models were examined for each outcome variable using Teacher Support as the independent variable and Academic Belonging as the mediator. The dependent variable for model 1 was cumulative GPA (Table 7). This first model neared significance, (F (2, 57) = 3.0478, p =.055, R^2 = .10), with a direct negative effect of teacher support on GPA, (b=-.0508, SE=.0240; CI [-.0987– -.0028]) and indirect positive effect through academic belonging (b=.0226, SE=.0104; CI [.0020 – .0441]). Model 2 (Table 8), where the dependent variable was EOY math exam, was significant, (F (2, 55) = 4.097, p = .0219, R^2 = .1297), with significant direct effect of teacher support on EOY Math (b =-1.5903, SE=.7641; CI [-3.1215 – -.0590]) and significant indirect effect through academic belonging (b =.9411, SE = .3596; CI [.3165 – 1.725]). Model 3 (Table 9), with the dependent variable as EOY Reading, was significant, (F (2, 55) =3.2855, p = .0449, R^2 = .1067), with nonsignificant direct effect of teacher support on EOY Reading (b =-1.7099, SE =.8665; CI [-3.4465 – .0267]) and significant indirect effect through Academic Belonging (b= .9852, SE= .4330; CI [.1590–1.8658]). (Figure 5)

Regarding student behaviors reported by teachers, Model 4 (Table 10) measuring Academic Skills yielded significance, (F (2, 57)=4.194, p=.020, R^2=.128), with direct negative effect of teacher support on Academic Skills (b =-.0492, SE = .0186; CI [-.0863 – -.0120]) and significant indirect effect through academic belonging (b=.0188, SE = .008; CI [.004 – .04]). Model 5 (Table 11), with Character Traits as dependent variable, was found significant (F (2, 57)=8.275, p=.000, R^2=.2255), with significant direct negative effect of teacher support on character traits (b= -.0537, SE =.0154; CI [-.084 – -

.0229]) and significant indirect positive effect through academic belonging (b=.0239, SE =.009; CI [.0062–.0435]). Finally, Model 6, with Intellectual Habits as dependent variable (Table 12), was found nonsignificant (F (2, 57) = 2.258, p=.113, R^2=.073), with a nonsignificant direct effect of teacher support on intellectual habits (b=-.033, SE=.0212; CI [-.0755 – .0095]), and nonsignificant indirect effect through academic belonging (b=.0191, SE=.0101; CI [-.0004– .039]) (Figure 6). There was, however, a positive trend observed in the direct effect of academic belonging on intellectual habits (t = 2.0, p = .0507).

Notably, for each of the 6 models there was a significant effect of teacher support on academic belonging (p >.000); this suggests that even when working with a smaller subset in this PROCESS analysis from the original 61 in the previous two analyses, there was a still an effect of teacher support on academic belonging. Finally, when Bonferroni correction was applied (.05/3=.017), only total effects for Model 5 remained significant (i.e., relations between Teacher Support and Character Traits mediated by Academic Belonging); ultimately, this suggests stronger support for this process compared to other models that only obtained significance against a p-value of .05 (i.e., EOY exams).

Parental Socialization and Outcomes

For parental academic socialization, no significance was found for any outcomes—either direct effects or indirect effects through Academic Belonging—on cumulative GPA, EOY Reading, EOY Math, Academic Skills, Character Traits, or Intellectual Habits (Tables 13-18).

Chapter 6: Discussion

MAIN FINDINGS

The Latinx families with whom we worked provided data which helped to identify a number of important relationships between stable, demographic factors, predictor variables, belonging, and academic outcomes. First, as parent-reported annual income increased, so too did parental academic socialization; in other words, as economic stability grows in the home, the more parental academic socialization a parent may find themselves able to provide to their child. Interestingly, as children increase in grade level, PAS scores decrease as well. It stands to reason that as students are progressing through their academic career, parents are enacting less active academic socialization, overall. In addition (though not the focus of the study) PAS was positively correlated with adolescents' increased handling of the English language. One explanation is that as students observe their parents exerting greater efforts towards the students' own educational attainment, students more readily learn and build on the host country's language. In the same vein of the findings of Grindal and Niheri (2015), when Latinx students receive the message that the system in which they find themselves should not be feared but, rather, trusted, they may feel more comfort with integrating with said system.

As discussed in chapter 2, the achievement gap for Latinx students is multifaceted, observed across multiple domains including the behavioral, the testing arena, and global measures such as grade-point-average. The importance of belonging, of identifying with the academic collective where one finds oneself, can be seen in both the correlational analysis and, in a different way, the PROCESS analysis. Correlations yielded significant relationships between academic belonging and end-of-year math exam scores, behaviors (character traits), and showed a trend with end-of-year-reading-exam

scores. Then, when analyzed using the PROCESS analysis, academic belonging significantly and positively mediated the relationship between teacher support and all outcome variables, save for intellectual habits.

Although academic belonging elsewhere has previously been demonstrated to positively predict processes similar to intellectual habits (see Matthews, Banerjee, Lauermann, 2014 and effects on self-regulated learning, i.e., planning, monitoring, evaluation of self for academic goal attainment), PROCESS direct-effects only revealed a trend in this direction, and not as strong as other processes. Taking prior discussions with the district administrator into account, the way that school staff are trained to identify character traits compared to intellectual habits may shed light on the difference between these processes and the mechanisms that facilitate their growth. While the latter works as a proxy for more global abilities that contribute to that single-individual's lifetime progress, character traits has more to do with the how the individual is engaging their social community—the good deeds they are enacting towards their fellow peers. It stands to reason that if one is being transformed at the level of belonging, of collective connection, the actions that person takes will observably serve said community—a dancer in the epistemological circle that drives growth forward (Valenzuela, Zamora, and Rubio, 2015).

In addition, academic belonging mediated teacher support and academic skills—which suggests that academic belonging affects students' prosocial behavior and also tracks well with their efforts to pass classes and obtain all A's. Interestingly, this latter relationship was not as pronounced when examining academic belonging as a mediational model for GPA proper (though, a significant indirect effect was still found). This difference in significance for the models may suggest that academic belonging predicts academic success for Latinx students in a broader way (pass, fail, all A's), rather

than as a continuous process (GPA scale of 0.00 to 4.0). These results echo the findings of Matthews, Banerjee, and Lauermann (2014), who found that academic belonging in students of color predicted changes in self-directed behavior and subsequent motivation to master content; however, while their study examined processes within a sample of Latinx and Black students, the present study was able to find mirrored outcomes when solely looking at Latinx students. This finding is useful in that it furthers the notion that academic belonging can work mechanistically to mobilize students from historically marginalized groups, to greater academic success (Faircloth and Hamm, 2005; Walton and Cohen, 2011).

The study yielded a number of results which were unexpected. Contrary to my hypothesis, parental academic socialization did not predict change in variance of academic belonging in the regression model. Although parental academic socialization was positively correlated with students' sense of academic belonging, it became nonsignificant when adding control variables in the step-wise regression, as well as in the PROCESS analysis (Figure 4). This result requires pause for deeper reflection. First, parents in this sample obtained a mean academic socialization-level at more than "Frequently," which may suggest a type of 'ceiling-effect' with Latinx parents placing a substantial effort to promote their children's education through messages of hard work. In line with previous studies (Ryan et al., 2010) Latinx parents in this sample are highly involved in their children's lives, caring greatly about their children's educational futures, placing a high premium in their children's academic wellbeing.

Though Latinx parents are understood to care greatly for their children's educational attainment, other processes also play their role. In Ryan (2016), researchers consider the effects of parental social capital (which includes processes such as speaking with school personnel, giving support to children, and exchanging information with other

adults in their child's life) and subsequent engagement of their adolescents in higher education using structural equational modeling. Similar to our sample, though at first there are demonstrable positive effects on adolescents' educational engagement via parenting practices, these become non-significant when adding in demographic variables (i.e., whether they can attend private school; students' own educational expectations). One interpretation is: try as Latinx parents might to socialize and support their children, other real challenges (i.e., financial, psychological) can effectually 'drown out' the measurable effects of such supportive practices. The homogeneity of this group (high parental academic socialization plus low income) may ultimately create a lack of statistical variance, with a nonsignificant change in belonging in the regression model. Subjectively speaking, this coheres with my own experience working with these families for four years: though, overall, these families are working with effort to provide educational experiences for their children, they are still pushing upwards, combating social anxieties and the challenges that arise with the immigrant experience.

Another process that may shed light on the effects of parental academic socialization is the negative relationship that emerged between grade level and academic belonging, both in correlation and regression. As children get older, parental academic socialization appears to decrease, which may impact children's overall experience of belonging to their academic setting. Indeed, previous researchers have found similar trends, with grade level increase predicting decrease in parental academic support (Alfaro and Umaña-Taylor, 2015; Chen, 2008), as well as a decrease in belonging in students of color (Matthews, Banerjee, & Lauermann, 2014; Witherspoon and Ennett, 2011). Some researchers hypothesize that with time adolescents may elicit less support from adult-figures, which may result in lower academic support. However, Kao and Tienda (1998) posit a relationship between lower socio economic status and the difficulty for students

from marginalized backgrounds to effectively maintain consistent levels of educational aspiration throughout adolescence. Putting the findings of my study with that of previous researchers together suggest that although Latinx parents are highly engaged in their children's educational processes, economic barriers and stressors may emerge which which ultimately dampen how much parental socialization parents can exert over time. In line with my experiences, the stressors of creating a home life and stable foundation for your family, ultimately, might swallow up any additional time for socialization.

While parents provide stories regarding process, passing on the importance of children making well-considered choices, another agent exists who also matters in these students' felt sense of connection: the teacher. I measured teacher support using a scale composed of questions that focused on academic support, yet also on emotional support ("my teacher really cares about me"). Confirming a partial hypothesis, teachers may play a vital role as gate keepers who signify to children whether they do and do not belong in that system. Latinx students, as previously discussed, are taught from an early age to trust their elders, to submit to authorities who their parents have sanctioned as "good." As students endorse feeling befriended and emotionally supported their teachers, they may also be feeling a stronger sense of connection to their home away from home. These findings are in line with the work of Stevens, Hamman, and Olivarez (2007) and the ideas proposed by Noddings (1992), in which the specific behaviors that teachers enact (i.e., modeling mastery orientation), and the types of pressure they directly apply to their students in the classroom, go on to have a measurable effect and can create a sense of belonging in their Latinx students. However, though teacher support is important, as Stevens, Hamman, and Olivarez (2007) offer there is a specific kind of teacher social support that lends itself to positive outcomes (emphasis on process-learning, creating academic challenges in classroom that encourages them to use reason and logic);

acknowledging that something of a granular process of teacher support is required for academic outcomes may help to shed light on the following discussion points.

Perhaps the most surprising result was that while teacher support positively predicted belonging itself, teacher support concurrently produced a negative correlation with all outcome variables; in contrast, while my original hypothesis did not specify a positive or negative relationship, one might expect that greater teacher support would result in higher academic outcomes. A few interpretations are offered here. Perhaps, students who experience greater scholastic and emotional support from teachers are specifically the students said teachers are targeting for intervention (i.e., the most in need). In this way, teachers in this sample are well-trained for assessing academically-at-risk students and providing a high level of support. From the perspective of the student, this would sound like: "I struggle with my grades, therefore, I experience more attention/support from my teacher."

Another (less optimistic) interpretation of this unexpected negative relationship is that teacher support carries with it a dark side: with additional support, students may actually come to feel stigmatized and targeted, bearing the weight of additional guilt, a felt sense of anxiety. Indeed, in the Maciel and Knudsen-Martin (2014) study, Latinx students described an "identity-bind" that arose when students felt they were "a dummy" and when negative attention was paid to them; however, the bind was resolved not when teachers simply paid attention to them, but when the "interaction" between student and teacher taught the students they were capable, with students remarking: "It's *the way* they call you to answer questions in class" (p. 491, italics added).

One can imagine, then, how a teacher's intense and negative focus can have a detrimental effect on one's educational psyche. However, when activating academic belonging as a mediator, the negative relationship between teacher support and outcome

variables becomes positive and significant in all but one model (intellectual habits). In other words, teacher support becomes effective to the degree to which it makes the student feel welcomed into the environment: once students feel they are part of the 'collective,' what follows is an open door and successful enterprise with other academic peers, as well as measurable academic achievement. Stevens, Hamman, and Olivarez (2007) found a similar process in their study: although teacher mastery-orientation did not have a direct effect on Latinx students' internalization of that value, when mediated through school belonging a significant indirect effect emerged in which students themselves began to enact mastery orientation behaviors they perceived in their teachers. Ultimately, teacher support is a complicated (in some ways, seemingly counterintuitive) process that carries with it weights towards both the positive and the negative: while a negative connection might emerge in negative experiences and some outcomes, a positive connection is observed in belonging which may carry with it corrective ramifications (i.e., belonging positively associated with other positive variables).

This interpretation aligns well with ideas in the psychological intervention literature presented elsewhere (Yeager, Walton, & Cohen, 2013; Walton and Cohen, 2011): when students (and especially adolescents) from marginalized communities experience that they are being targeted, they are more likely to rebuff or resent the implication that they need help. After all, it is especially during this time of development when individuals are working towards growing in who they are, with resources around them. If one experiences stigmatization with that support, or worse if one feels tokenized and/or objectified, one is not likely to engage genuinely and thoroughly in the pursuit. One mechanism for why an increased experience of being targeted by teachers could predict lower scores can be that of *stereotype threat*, i.e., how one's awareness of the way society views one can have negative effects on one's outcomes (Aronson, Fried, and

Good, 2002). For example, when students who are part of a marginalized group feel their identity with that group is being put on trial, they are more likely to feel anxiety, which can negatively lower their scores. Though there may be a hidden mediational process taking place, it stands to reason that should Latinx students become aware that they are being targeted by their teachers specifically due to ethnicity/race, a negative relationship between effort exertion on teacher's part and academic outcomes might ensue. Again, should Latinx students feel they connect, belong, and thrive within their academic contexts, then there is no false mirror, no sense of being a 'project,' one grows healthily in communitive relation with other fellow thinkers. One belongs.

Returning back to the relationship between family processes and academic belonging, Latinx parents seem highly interested and invested in their children's education, not just in regards to verbal value of education, but also the social returns that come from engaging in hard work, *la lucha,* i.e., the struggle by which children form a coherent identity. In her seminal work, "Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza," Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldua (1987) talks about what arises when Latinx folk begin to healthily unravel their identity binds, unlocking the meaning behind hard work and transformation:

> *Now that we [have] a name, some of the fragmented pieces begin to fall together—who we were, what we were, how we had evolved. We begin to get glimpses of what we might eventually become. Yet the struggle of* ***identities*** *continues, the struggle of borders is our reality still. One day the inner struggle will cease and a true integration take place. In the meantime, tenemos que hacer la lucha (we have to enact the struggle).*

This "struggle," this grappling with boundaries and borders, is part of the historical identity of the Latinx individual. Hard work, determination, perseverance, grit, are part of the makeup of the Latinx immigrant parent. However, though the work being done by Latinx moms, dads, and students as a result of *familismo* is important to note, one must also consider a secondary process that helps explain the Latinx student's academic success. *Personalismo* and *Respeto/Dignidad* should continue to be studied and explored, taking into consideration how the community-leaders in the child's life make meaningful differences. Teachers should awaken to the call sounded, step into their psycho-relational role amongst the Latinx community, and persist in their promotion of Latinx-positive curriculum, educating Latinx students about the contributions being made by Latinx scholars nationwide.

WEAKNESSES AND LIMITATIONS

Perhaps the most limiting factor to the current study is the sample size. Procuring a sample even this large proved challenging due to the different aspects of data required to run the complete analysis and methods required to obtain them (i.e., home visits, contact with schools). Although the sample size available provided enough power to answer the questions of this study, more complicated mediation models would be important to investigate. For example, one question arises about whether further mediational variables exist between academic belonging and certain outcomes variables like GPA or EOY exam scores, such as Character Traits and Intellectual Habits. Although this type of process information would prove informative, I am left to theorize about possible pathways towards academic success for the reader based on the literature and intent of the educational system. However, that the analysis still yielded such strong statistical relationships between academic belonging, predictors, and certain outcomes

may indicate the predictive power that exists; a degree of confidence can be gained from the findings and provides future thinkers with a helpful path to follow.

In addition, the sample selected here by and large identified as *Integrated*, meaning they experienced strong connections to both the country from which their parents immigrated, as well as the United States. Previous studies conducted directly with children of immigrant parents have shown that effective cultural integration allows individuals to successfully toggle back and forth between modes of culture, with positive results in regards to increasing prosocial behaviors and adaptive skills (Framboise, Coleman, and Gerton, 1993; Schwartz, Zamboanga, & Hernandez Jarvis, 2007). Had this sample been comprised of only first-generation-immigrant students (likely indicated by higher scores on the *Separation* subscale of the AHIMSA) other results may have been produced. For example, first-generation-Latinx-students tend to obtain college degrees with less frequency than second-generation-Latinx-students, with less advanced degrees, and complete overall fewer years of education than second-generation students (Maldonado, 2006; Tran & Valdez, 2017). Indeed, theorists have argued for a second-generation-advantage among Latinx folk, though the extant data is mixed. Therefore, the results of this study should be carefully interpreted when considering how they apply to academic success in first-generation Latinx students, proper, again given the large presence of second-generation students present.

Another exclusionary point of criteria was that parents had to claim bilingualism for their children. Some studies have pointed to the benefits that come along with engaging bilingually, including cognitive/executive control, as well as the capacity for a greater relational-emotional connection with immigrant family and extended family members (Bialystok, 2011; Santiago-Rivera, and Altarriba, 2002). It stands to reason that the children in this sample had protective factors and strengths buttressing them, helping

them find success in the classroom that they otherwise would not have; this strength may be suggested by the significant correlation that Intellectual Habits had both with English and Spanish speaking ability.

The positive effects that can arise from these two empowering elements (i.e., dual language, cultural integration) cannot be overstated; this group of Latinx students represent, on average, a group who are on some level engaging two languages, and reporting a connection to both cultures and likely reaping the rewards thereof. However, these demographic realities make the findings from this research important because it allows us to see even with these strengths, areas for academic growth remain for these Latinx youth when it comes to cumulative grades and not failing classes. In addition, the findings are important because they suggest that even when our Latinx parents are reportedly academically socializing their children, the teacher-student relationship plays an integral part in shaping a student's connection to their school.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Teachers and school personnel (counselors, administrators, school psychologists), should be aware of the implications of this study. First, verbal and emotional support from school staff may be but one key that unlocks the door for further academic achievement; the other, is to convince the Latinx student that they genuinely have a rooted connection to the academic infrastructure where they reside. One way to do this is to integrate cultural studies directly into the curriculum. What this type of health-giving curriculum entails is a natural discovery regarding the historicity of the immigration processes, indigenous heritages, and the arts. In this way, teachers can pay honor to the backgrounds of their Latinx students, helping to identify the wealth and social capital that vibrates within the Latinx story (Valenzuela, Zamora, and Rubio, 2015). Integrating these

important aspects of the Latinx story seamlessly into the curriculum might create an organic experience within the Latinx student that lets them naturally 'know' that their collective identity is, neither marginal nor periphery, but in fact integral to the American experience.

The process of delinking and decolonization within systems of education includes the method by which we analyze and deconstruct the very ways we measure and agree on what success means for the individual and the body-politic; i.e., a transformation at the level of epistemology, and a questioning of our knowledge-base. Ultimately, what a culture-conscious ethnic study integration does is create a plurality of thought, and a valuation that doing education well may have different manifestations across cultures, giving life and validation to the lived learning experiences of Latinx folk. And so, rather than simply focus on how we can get students to arrive to a higher GPA and EOY math score, we might also consider how Seligman's and Peterson's "Character" construct maps out on the psychology of the Latinx student. Teachers and educators might, with a compassionate and authentic curiosity, dialogue and ask Latinx adolescents, families, and community leaders about how the pillars on which their local system of education are built fail to 'speak' to the *educación* these families wish to engage.

In terms of mental health professionals and clinical therapists, the study highlights the importance of doing therapy collaboratively, not only enlisting the help of immediate family members, but also seeking to understand how their Latinx adolescent patients are interacting with the educational staff at their schools. Interventions that seek to support academic staff, as well as the individual child, may help to facilitate treatment, and create a relational-environmental experience for the Latinx child to feel comforted within a system of change (Arredondo et al, 2014). Also, providing psychoeducation to teachers about the ways Latinx parents socialize their children can help teachers ground

themselves in the extant psycho-educational literature, and understand how they are perceived, on average, by caring and supportive Latinx parents.

As for future researchers, a number of follow-up studies may be fruitful here. Qualitative studies could explore Latinx students' narratives concerning how specific teachers succeeded in making them "fit in" or, conversely, instances when teachers enacted behaviors that communicated to the student they did not fully belong within the academic space. In addition, the experience of the Latinx father is severely missing from the extant data—perhaps reflected in only one of the parents from this sample being a father. Exploration of how Latinx dads are socializing their children in regards to academics, and the types of techniques they are implementing as they guide them, is highly needed at this time. Such evidence might also help explain other factors and processes related to children's mental engagement with their schools.

In terms of quantitative work needing to be done, studies with larger sample sizes could explore mediational or structural equation models to analyze the full relationship between teacher support, academic belonging, actions that reflect character traits, and academic variables. These type of studies would be informative in that they would increase understanding of the various 'links' in the chain necessary for the academic gap to be closed effectively. These studies may also consider introducing a version of parental academic socialization questionnaire to the Latinx students and measure whether they experience academic socialization to the same degree that parents are trying to support them. Further, an experimental study with that randomizes Latinx students into different intervention groups to see how best academic belonging can be increased, such as: a) psychoeducation groups for teachers designed to help them facilitate positive-identity interactions free of stigmatization; b) therapy groups that subtly cognitively-restructure the negative messages Latinx adolescents have already received; c) a group whose

curriculum is modified to include the history of Latinx folk to infuse powerful, yet subtle, transformative messages; d) control group who receives education-as-usual by teachers. Examining effects in this manner can help future researchers parse out the most economic and effective interventions that can be implemented within the academic year, seeking to understand how agents of change can affect children's sense of belonging. Finally, given the cross-sectional nature of this study, I was only able to examine relationships at a given point in time. Other longitudinal (and experimental) studies could instead examine the dynamic and fluid nature of change in academic belonging, working within the more natural parameters of a burgeoning dyadic parent-child relationship, and a burgeoning dyadic teacher-student relationship, across time.

For parents, a few thoughts and recommendations here. Given that parental academic socialization appears to be negatively correlated with grade level, there may be a solid recommendation for parents to remain stalwart in the manner they academically socialize their children. In other words, parents should be encouraged to find ways to increase parents' level of engagement on the upper-grade-ranges, while also validating the emotional anxiety and stress that oftentimes accompanies the transition to academics at older stages of life. Although physiologically their children may appear more mature and capable—especially if they have had the privilege to experience solid educational supports thus far—it may be helpful to reinforce to parents the ideas of staying the course whilst providing praise and gratitude for what parents have already overcome.

Second, given the measurable effect that teacher support has on academic outcomes, another equally important recommendation is for parents to partner up and remain vigilant of the types of instructors and teachers who are working with their children, especially as they continue to grow in age. Having strong academic allies in the school community to rely on may be especially helpful for these parents as they seek to

increase the academic returns on their investment of socialization. In other words, parents could talk with their children about the kinds of experiences they are having with their teachers, and get to know which teachers are creating an emotional resonance with their child. Through this, parents can maximize the processes taking place at the school. Here, a twist on the well-known saying by Latinx parents, *Dime con quien andas y te dire quien eres* ("Tell me with whom you are, and I'll tell you who you are") can be put into practice: as parents gain knowledge about the kinds of academic company involved in the lives of their children, they can truly come to know more about who the adolescent growing in their home is becoming.

CONCLUSION

Combining my observational data in chapter 3 with the quantitative information found in the analysis proves especially validating now. By working alongside these Latinx parents and their children for four consecutive years, I came to observe, through a first-person perspective, the intense and emotional power by which Latinx moms (and dad) compel their children forward. Amidst the small living spaces, the hurried and rushed somatic experiences, and the cacophony of yells and ambient noise, these parents give their all. Bundled with a perseverant heart and a wisdom that digs deep from the ancient earth, these families care for and contribute with their person towards their child's academic wellbeing. They do this so well; my hope is that they could find the community-support to remain consistent in their socializations across years—that someone would validate them, would tell them, "You're doing a good job."

In his description of the classic defense mechanism *identification,* psychoanalyst Robert White (1975) describes a form of coping implemented by adolescents as they navigate their new stage in life, stretching towards new horizons of development:

> *"The child's character is shaped by his identification with* ***parents*** *and* ***other people*** *who are important figures during his earliest years; through such identifications he accepts and assimilates their* ***values, beliefs,*** *and* ***patterns of behavior****. But this tendency to identify with an important person is by no means limited to early childhood; it is also an important process in* ***adolescence*** *when a person in this age range is affected by the dress, speech, mannerisms, and hair styles of admired heroes of stage, screen, or gridiron. Many are enduring and important; for example,* ***teachers*** *of adolescents often become much more than just teachers –they become models whose influence remains for years,* ***sometimes for a lifetime****."*

The notion that we carry within our schematic-frameworks images of individuals who have helped us integrate our different pieces is intriguing. Paying close attention to the relational dynamics in Latinx folk can prove useful, adding a dimensionality to the way the Latinx-academic experiences growth and support. Taking a cue from Erikson, Latinx adolescents, at this stage, work to consolidate and unify the disparate parts of themselves, finding ways to integrate themselves into a person made whole. The hope, of course, is that they will have educators alongside to help make sense of these changes, guiding their hands and feet as they take the steps towards achievement. The message for all of us—teacher, parent, researcher, clinician—is to take seriously our part in the unfolding drama that is their educational life, to play our role in the theatre of their academic ascent.

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of participants

Characteristic	Child	Parent
Age	M = 11.82 SD=1.07 Range = 10 to 15	M=38.92 SD=6.11 Range = 27 to 52
Current Grade	M= 6.62 SD=1.01 Range = 5 to 9	*NA*
Gender *Female* *Male*	49.2% (30) 50.8% (31)	98.4% (60) 1.6% (1)
Ethnicity *Hispanic/Latinx*	100% (61)	100% (61)
Parent Generational Status *First-generation* *Second-generation* *Third-gen or higher*	*NA*	90.2% (55) 8.2% (5) 1.6% (1)
Latinx Nationality/Identity *Mexican* *Central-American* *(Honduran, Nicaraguan, Salvadorian)*	95% (58) 5% (3)	95% (58) 5% (3)
Income (annual)	M = $20,000 to 30,000 Range = Under $10,000 to over $100,000	*NA*
Acculturation *Integration* *Assimilation* *Separation* *Marginalization*	M= 4.8 SD=1.97 M= 1.9 SD=1.76 M= 1.03 SD=1.27 M= 0.16 SD=0.37	*NA*

Table 1 (Continued)

Level of Education (years)	*NA*	M = 10.66 SD=3.52 Range = 1 to 17
Child-Language Ability (ITALK) *English* *Spanish*	M = 4.56, SD = .56, Range = 2.6 to 5 M = 4.17, SD = .76 Range = 1.8 to 5	*NA*

Table 2

Mean and Standard Deviation of predictor variables and outcome variables

Characteristic	Mean (*SD*)
Parental Academic Socialization **(parent report)**	4.39 (*0.49*)
Teacher Academic and Emotional Support **(child-report)**	4.21 (*0.58*)
Academic Belonging **(child-report)**	3.07 (*0.32*)
Academic Skills (**school-report**)	0.79 (*0.63*)
Character Traits (**school-report**)	1.37 (*0.55*)
Intellectual Habits (**school-report**)	1.11 (0.70)
Cumulative Grade Point Average (**school-report**)	2.74 (*0.80*)
EOY Math percentile (**school-report**)	55.31 (*25.59*)
EOY Reading percentile (**school-report**)	57.17 (*28.36*)

Table 3

Correlations between variables of interest: descriptive, outcomes, predictors

	Acad Belonging	Parental Acad Social	Teacher Support	EOY READ	EOY MATH	Cum GPA	Acad Skills	Char Traits	Int Habits
Child's Gender	-.04	-.06	-.17	.16	.07	.27*	.25*	.28*	42**
Child's Age	-.19	-.11	-.09	.16	.14	-.05	.15	.19	.02
Child's Grade	-.32**	-.23*	-.19	.17	.04	.71	.17	.15	.08
Parent Edu Level	-.03	.17	-.08	.15	.04	.18	.18	.17	.17
Fam Income	.01	.21*	.00	.26*	.30*	.29*	.25*	.14	.20
Parent Gen Status	.10	.06	.02	.14	.13	.16	.24*	.04	.11
Child Eng Ability	.09	.30**	.16	.24*	.28*	.30*	.36**	.25*	.44**
Child Span Ability	.08	.04	.12	-.00	.00	.10	.19	.13	.28*
Assimilation	-.11	.07	-.25*	.00	-.02	.06	.05	.00	-.07
Separation	-.07	.12	.27*	-.14	-.06	-.04	-.07	-.10	-.11
Integration	.15	-.16	.05	.10	.05	-.01	.01	.06	.14
Marginalization	-.07	.07	-.03	-.05	.04	-.07	-.03	.01	-.01

Note. Acad Belonging = Academic Belonging, Parental Acad Social = Parental Academic Socialization, Fam Income = family household income, Parent Edu Level= Parental level of education, Parent Gen Status = Parental Generational Status, Child Eng Ability = Child's English Ability, Child Span Ability = Child's Spanish Ability, EOY READ = End of year reading exam, EOY MATH = End of year math exam, Cum GPA = Cumulative grade-point-average, Acad Skills = Academic Skills, Char Traits = Character Traits, Int Habits = Intellectual Habits; *$p <$ .05; **$p <$ .01

Table 4

Correlations amongst predictor variables and outcome variables

	Acad Belong	Parent Acad Social	Teacher Support	EOY READ	EOY MATH	Cum GPA	Acad Skills	Char Traits	Int Habits
Acad Belong	1								
Parent Acad Social	.28*	1							
Teacher Support	.45**	.28*	1						
EOY READ	.21	.11	-.13	1					
EOY MATH	.25*	.04	-.12	.79**	1				
Cum GPA	.16	.08	-.17	.77**	.80**	1			
Acad Skills	.15	.05	-.23*	.57**	.64**	.73**	1		
Char Traits	.24*	.09	-.25*	.35**	.38**	.47**	.52**	1	
Int Habits	.19	.16	-.09	.44**	.50**	.63**	.77**	.68**	1
PAS – Value of Ed	.09	.77**	.25*	.08	.10	.13	.07	.00	.15
PAS – Hard Work	.32**	.87**	.18	.15	.06	.11	.05	.15	.16
PAS – Emo Auto	.21	.85**	.32*	-.00	-.05	-.06	-.01	.01	.08

Note. Acad Belonging = Academic Belonging, Parent Acad Social = Parental Academic Socialization, PAS- Value of Ed = Parental Academic Socialization – Value of Education, PAS-Hard Work= Parental Academic Socialization – Hard Work, PAS-Emo Auto= Emotional Autonomy, EOY READ = End of year reading exam, EOY MATH = End of year math exam, Cum GPA = Cumulative grade-point-average, Acad Skills = Academic Skills, Char Traits = Character Traits, Int Habits = Intellectual Habits; *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$

Table 5

*Model Summary of regression of **academic belonging** on key variables*

Model	R	R Square	SE of the Estimate	R Square Change	Sig F Change (total model p-value)
1[a]	.402	.161	5.08	.161	.290
2[b]	.462	.214	4.97	.052	.071
3[c]	.561	.315	4.68	.101	.009**

a. variables entered: Integration, Grade level, Income, Parental Generational Status, child gender, English-speaking ability, Spanish-speaking ability, Parent Education Level

b. variable entered, in addition to previous: Parental Academic Socialization

c. variable entered, in addition to previous: Teacher Support

Table 6

*Coefficients from linear regression predicting child-report of **academic belonging** from parent-report of parental academic socialization, child-report of teacher support, and grade level*

Step	Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
Model 1[a]					
Grade level	-1.08	.42	-.33	-2.57	.013
Model 2[b]					
Grade level	-.88	.425	-.27	-2.07	.043
PAS	.092	.050	.25	1.84	.071
Model 3[c]					
Grade level	-.73	.405	-.225	-1.81	.07
PAS	.058	.048	.16	1.20	.234
TS	.39	.142	.348	2.71	.009

a. variables entered: Integration, Income, child gender, child age, English-speaking deficits, Spanish-speaking deficits, Parental Generational Status, Parent Education Level, Child Grade Level

b. variable entered in addition to previous variables: Parental Academic Socialization

c. variable entered in addition to previous variables: Teacher Support

Table 7

*PROCESS results of **cumulative grade-point-average** using output of overall model, teacher support direct effect, and teacher support indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,57) = 3.047$	.096
TS Direct Effect	-.05	.024	-2.11	[-.09 – -.002]		
TS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.0226	.0104		[.02 - .041]		

Table 8

*PROCESS results of **end-of-year math exams** using output of overall model, direct effects of teacher support on math exams, and indirect effects of teacher support on math exams through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for indirect effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,55) = 4.10$	.13
TS Direct Effect	-1.60	.76	-2.08	[-3.12 – -.06]		
TS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.94	.36		[.32 – 1.73]		

Table 9

*PROCESS results of **end-of-year reading exams** using output of overall model, teacher support direct effect, and teacher support indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,55) = 3.29$	.11
TS Direct Effect	-1.71	.87	-1.97	[-3.45 – .026]		
TS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.96	.44		[.155– 1.881]		

Table 10

*PROCESS results of **student's academic skills** using output of overall model, teacher support direct effect, and teacher support indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,57) = 4.19$	.13
TS Direct Effect	-.05	.02	-2.65	[-.09 – -.012]		
TS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.018	.008		[.003 - .035]		

Table 11

*PROCESS results of **student's character traits** using output of overall model, teacher support direct effect, and teacher support indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,57) = 8.23$	.23
TS Direct Effect	-.05	.015	-3.50	[-.09 – -.023]		
TS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.024	.009		[.01 - .04]		

Table 12

*PROCESS results of **student's intellectual habits** using output of overall model, teacher support direct effect, and teacher support indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,57) = 2.26$	.07
TS Direct Effect	-.03	.021	-1.55	[-.075 –.009]		
TS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.02	.010		[-.0004 – .04]		

Table 13

*PROCESS results of **cumulative grade-point-average** using output of overall model, parental academic socialization direct effect, and parental academic socialization indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,57) = 0.78$	.03
PAS Direct Effect	.002	.007	.26	[-.01 – .017]		
PAS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.002	.003		[-.002 – .009]		

Table 14

*PROCESS results of **end-of-year math exams** using output of overall model, parental academic socialization direct effect, and parental academic socialization indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,55) = 1.81$	.062
PAS Direct Effect	-.04	.24	-.18	[-.52 – .44]		
PAS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.12	.10		[-.01 – .37]		

Table 15

*PROCESS results of **end-of-year reading exams** using output of overall model, parental academic socialization direct effect, and parental academic socialization indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,55) = 1.317$	.045
PAS Direct Effect	.10	.26	.36	[-.44 – .631]		
PAS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.11	.11		[-.05 – .367]		

Table 16

*PROCESS results of **students' academic skills** using output of overall model, parental academic socialization direct effect, and parental academic socialization indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,57)$ =.613	.03
PAS Direct Effect	.000	.006	.03	[-.011 – .012]		
PAS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.002	.002		[-.001 – .006]		

Table 17

*PROCESS results of **students' character traits** using output of overall model, parental academic socialization direct effect, and parental academic socialization indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,57) = 1.817$	.06
PAS Direct Effect	.001	.005	.187	[-.009 –.01]		
PAS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.003	.002		[-.001 – .008]		

Table 18

*PROCESS results of **students' intellectual habits** using output of overall model, parental academic socialization direct effect, and parental academic socialization indirect effect through academic belonging*

	B	SE	*t*	*95% confidence interval for effects*	*F(df)*	R^2
Model Summary					$F(2,57) = 1.38$	.046
PAS Direct Effect	.01	.01	.86	[-.007 –.018]		
PAS Indirect Effect through ISQ	.002	.002		[-.002 – .01]		

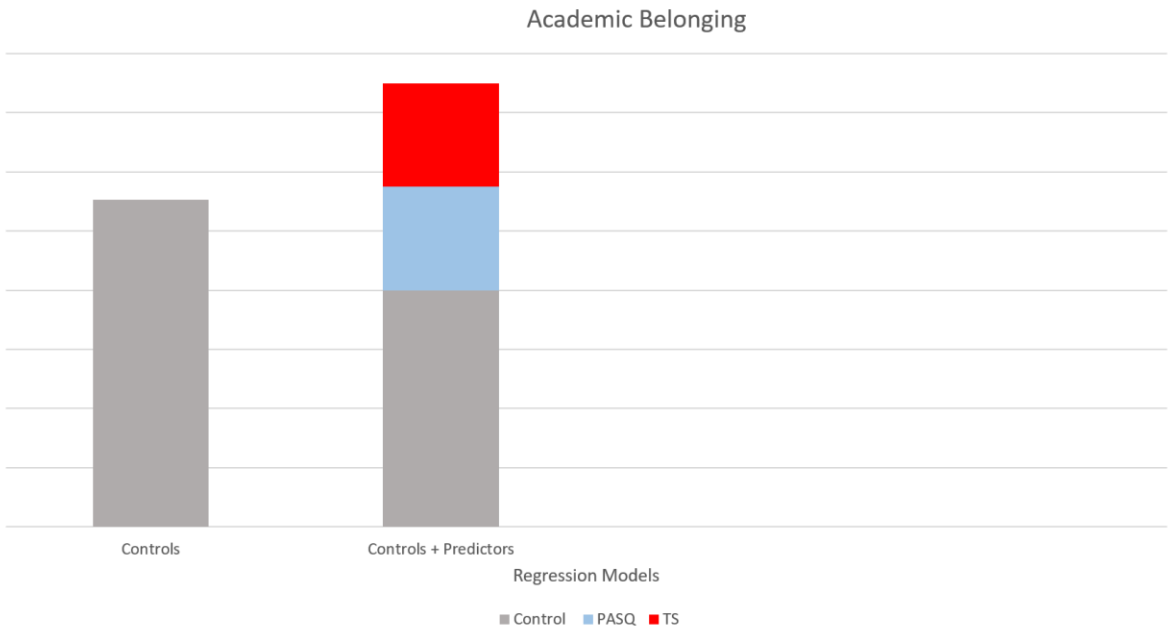

Figure 1. Hypothesized Regression Models: Academic Belonging regressed on Controls, and Predictor Variables (Parental Academic Socialization and Teacher Support)

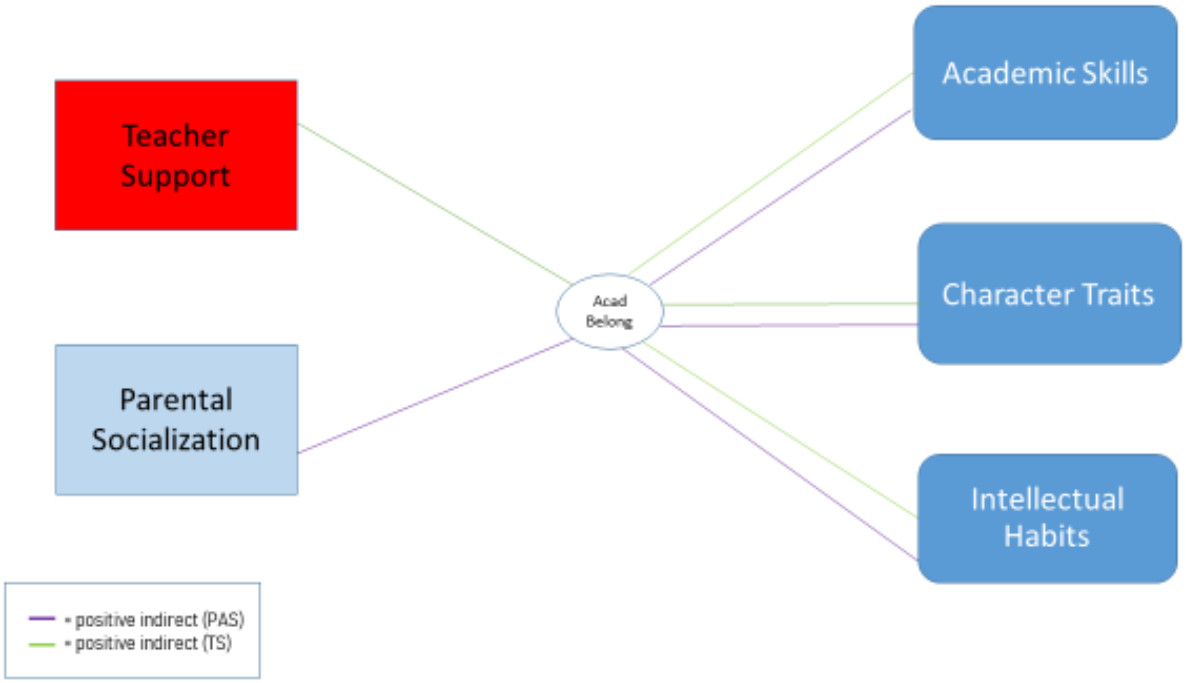

Figure 2. Hypothesized Model: Mediational Analysis of Parental Academic Socialization and Teacher Support, with Positive Indirect Effects on Academic Behaviors through Academic Belonging

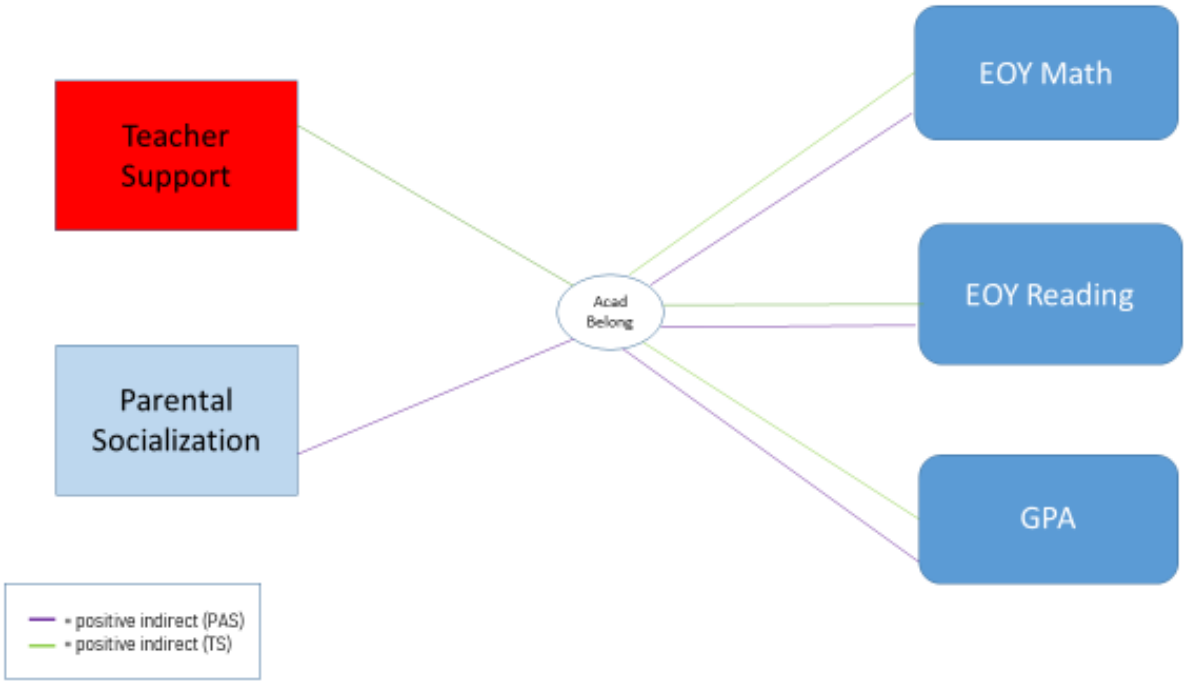

Figure 3. Hypothesized Model: Mediational Analysis of Parental Academic Socialization and Teacher Support, with Indirect Effect on Academic Achievement through Academic Belonging

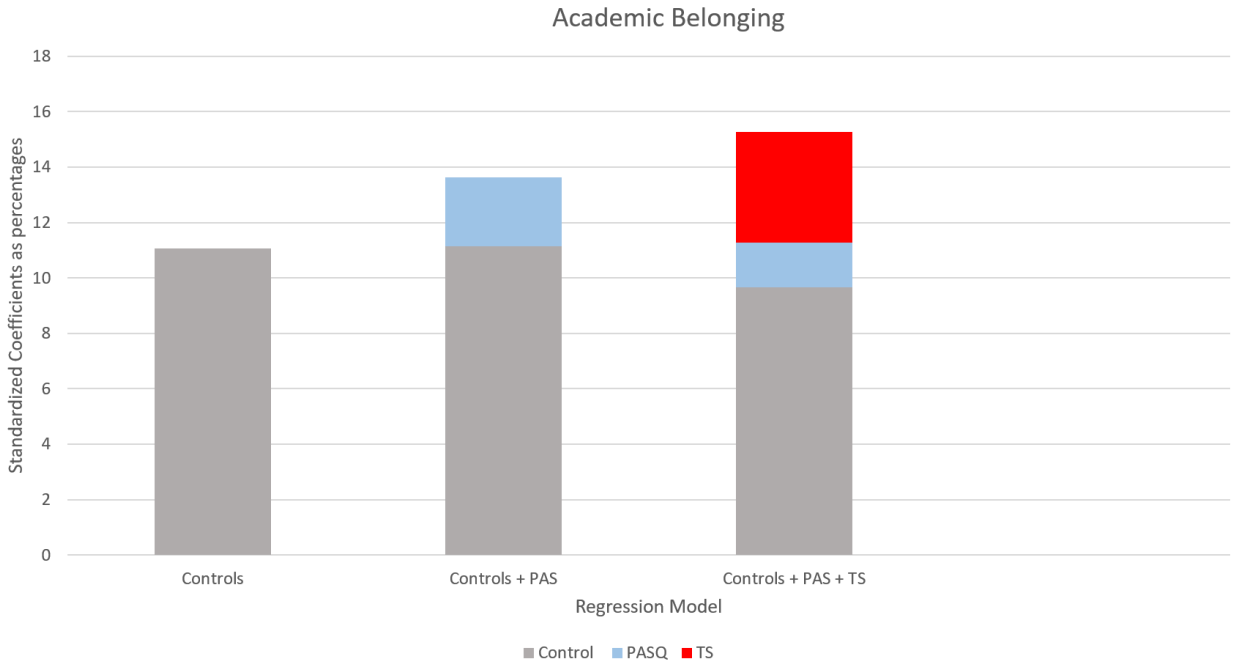

Figure 4. Actual Regression Models: Academic Belonging regressed on Controls, Parental Academic Socialization, and Teacher Support (Beta Coefficients as percentages)

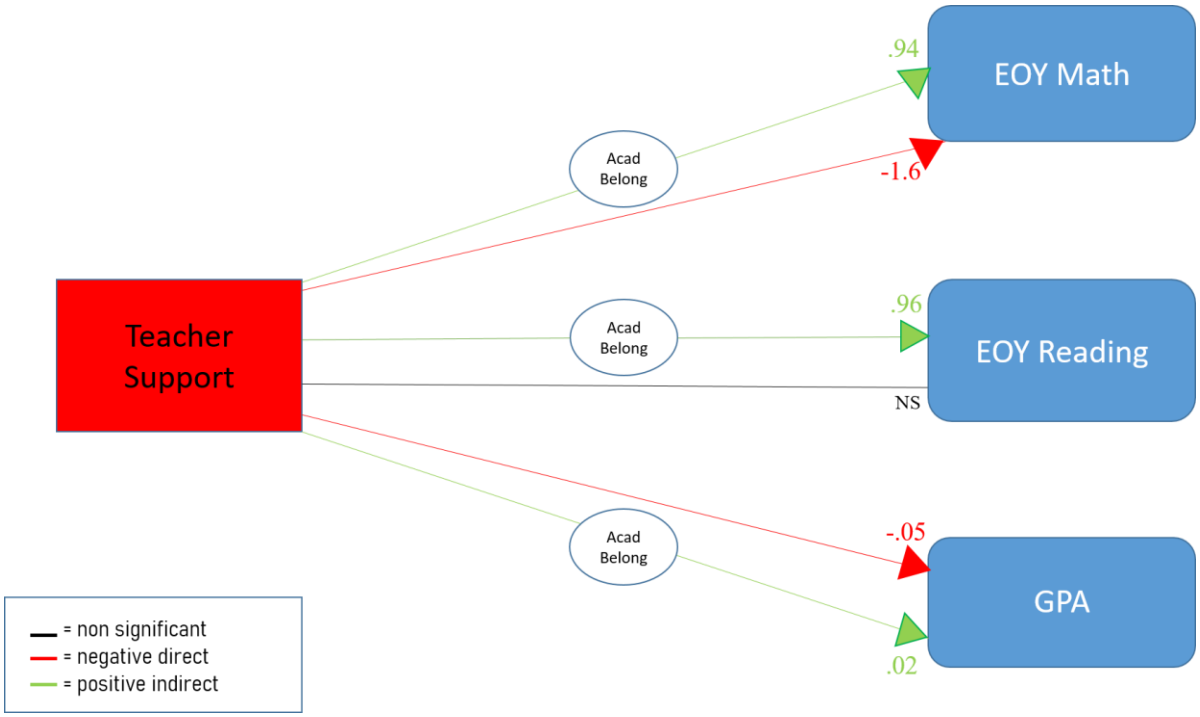

Figure 5. Actual Mediation Model: Mediational Analysis of Teacher Support on Academic Achievement, with Direct Effects and Indirect Effects through Academic Belonging (Showing beta coefficients if significant)

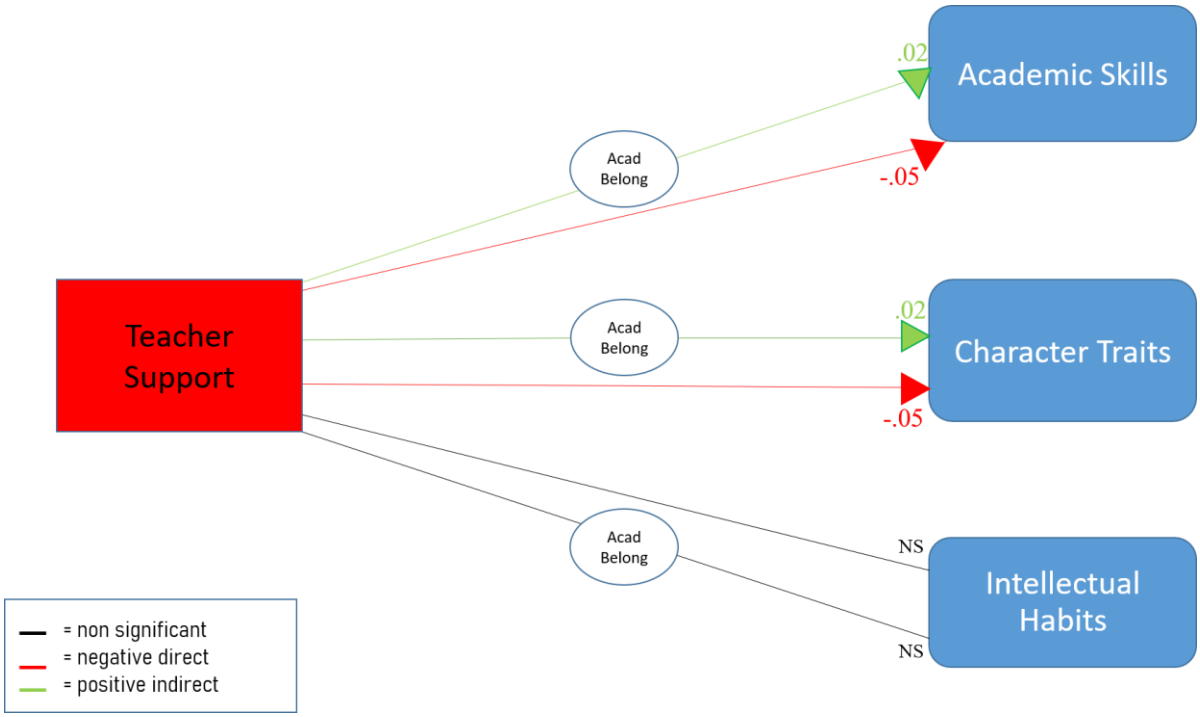

Figure 6. Actual Mediation Model: Mediational Analysis of Teacher Support on Academic Behaviors, with Direct Effects and Indirect Effects through Academic Belonging (Showing beta coefficients if significant)

References

Alfaro, E., and Umaña-Taylor, A. (2015). "The Longitudinal Relation Between Academic Support and Latino Adolescents' Academic Motivation." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 37, no. 3: 319–341.

Alfaro, E., Umaña-Taylor, A., and Bámaca, M. (2006). "The Influence of Academic Support on Latino Adolescents' Academic Motivation." *Family Relations* 55, no. 3: 279–291.

Anderman, Lynley H. (2003). "Academic and Social Perceptions as Predictors of Change in Middle School Students' Sense of School Belonging." *The Journal of Experimental Education* 72, no. 1: 5–22. doi:10.1080/00220970309600877.

Annual Update of the HHS Poverty Guidelines. (2020). Retrieved from https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/01/17/2020-00858/annual-update-of-the-hhs-poverty-guidelines

Anzaldúa, G. (1987). Borderlands/la frontera (Vol. 3). San Francisco: aunt lute books.

Aronson, J., Fried, C., and Good, C. (2002). Reducing the effects of stereotype threat on african american college students by shaping theories of intelligence. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 38(2), 113-125. doi:10.1006/jestp.2001.1491

Aronowitz, S., and Giroux, H. (1985). *Education under Siege: The Conservative, Liberal, and Radical Debate over Schooling*. Book, Whole. South Hadley, Mass: Bergin & Garvey.

Arredondo, P., Gallardo-Cooper, M., Delgado-Romero, E. A., & Zapata, A. L. (2014). Culturally responsive counseling with Latinas/os. John Wiley & Sons.

Ashmore, R. D., Deaux, K., & McLaughlin-Volpe, T. (2004). An Organizing Framework for Collective Identity: Articulation and Significance of Multidimensionality. Psychological Bulletin, 130(1), 80–114. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.130.1.80

Athanases, S., Achinstein, B., Curry, M., and Ogawa, R. (2016). "The Promise and Limitations of a College- Going Culture: Toward Cultures of Engaged Learning for Low-SES Latina/O Youth." *Teachers College Record* 118, no. 7: 1–60.

Austin Independent School District. (2009). *Preliminary results on 2009 Texas Assessment of Knowledge & Skills Tests show Austin students are narrowing the achievement gap.* Austin, TX: Author.

Bancroft, K. (2009). "To Have and to Have Not: The Socioeconomics of Charter Schools." *Education & Urban Society* 41, no. 2: 248–79.

Barajas-López, F. (2014). "Mexican Immigrant Students' Schooling Experiences and the Construction of Disengagement in Mathematics Learning Contexts." *Journal of Latinos and Education* 13, no. 1: 14–32. doi:10.1080/15348431.2013.800818.

Baumeister, R., and Leary, M. (1995). "The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation." *Psychological Bulletin* 117, no. 3: 497–529. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497.

Bernat, D., Schmeelk-Cone, K., Caldwell, C., Kohn-Wood, L., and Zimmerman, M. (2003). "Racial Identity and Academic Attainment among African American Adolescents." *Child Development* 74, no. 4: 1076–1090.

Blum, L. (2015). "Race and Class Categories and Subcategories in Educational Thought and Research."*Theory and Research in Education* 13, no. 1: 87–104.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist, 32*(7), 513-531. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.32.7.513

Boser, U., Wilhelm, M., and Hanna, R. (2014). "The Power of the Pygmalion Effect: Teachers' Expectations Strongly Predict College Completion." *Center for American Progress*.

Bowlby, J. (1969). Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment. New York Basic Books.

Braveman, P., Cubbin, C., Egerter, S., Williams, D., and Pamuk, E. (2010). "Socioeconomic Disparities in Health in the United States: What the Patterns Tell Us." *American Journal of Public Health* 100, no. S1: S186–96. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2009.166082.

Braveman, P., Egerter, S. and Williams, D. (2011). "The Social Determinants of Health: Coming of Age." *Annual Review of Public Health* 32, no. 1: 381–98. doi:10.1146/annurev- publhealth-031210-101218

Brown, A. V. (2008). "Effectively Educating Latino/A Students: A Comparative Study of Participation Patterns of Hispanic American and Anglo-American University Students." *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 7, no. 2: 97–118. doi:10.1177/1538192707313929.

Bialystok, E. (2011). Reshaping the mind: The benefits of bilingualism. Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology, 65(4), 229-35.

Caldera, Y., and Lindsey, E. (2013). *Mexican American Children and Families: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Book, Whole. New York, NY: Routledge, 2015. Carrillo, Juan F. "The Unhomely in Academic Success: Latino Males Navigating the Ghetto Nerd

Borderlands." *Culture, Society and Masculinities* 5, no. 2: 193–207. doi:10.3149/CSM.0502.193.

Ceballo, R., Maurizi, L. K., Suarez, G. A., and Aretakis, M. T. (2014). Gift and sacrifice: Parental involvement in Latino adolescents' education. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, *20*(1), 116–127. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033472

Cerezo, A., and McWhirter, B. (2012). "A Brief Intervention Designed to Improve Social Awareness and Skills to Improve Latino College Student Retention." *College Student Journal* 46, no. 4: 867–879.

Chang, J., and Le, T. (2010). "Multiculturalism as a Dimension of School Climate: The Impact on the Academic Achievement of Asian American and Hispanic Youth." *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 16, no. 4: 485–92. doi:10.1037/a0020654.

Chavous, T., Bernat, D., Schmeelk-Cone, K., Caldwell, C., Kohn-Wood, L., and Zimmerman, M. (2003). Racial Identity and Academic Attainment among African American Adolescents. Child Development, 74(4), 1076-1090.

Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. American Journal of Sociology, 94, S95-S120. doi:10.1086/228943

Connell, J., and Wellborn, J. (1991). "Competence, Autonomy, and Relatedness: A Motivational Analysis of Self-System Processes." In *Self Processes and Development.*, 43–77. The Minnesota Symposia on Child Psychology, Vol. 23. Hillsdale, NJ, US: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Darder, A. (1991). *Culture and Power in the Classroom: A Critical Foundation for Bicultural Education*. Book, Whole. New York: Bergin & Garvey.

Dornbusch, S., Ritter, P., Leiderman, H., Roberts, D., and Fraleigh, M. (1987). "The Relation of Parenting Style to Adolescent School Performance." *Child Development* 58, no. 5: 1244–57. doi:10.2307/1130618.

Duckworth, A. L., Peterson, C., Matthews, M. D., and Kelly, D. R. (2007). Grit: Perseverance and passion for long-term goals. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92(6), 1087-1101

Durand, T. (2011). "Latina Mothers' Cultural Beliefs About Their Children, Parental Roles, and Education: Implications for Effective and Empowering Home-School Partnerships." *The Urban Review* 43, no. 2: 255–78. doi:10.1007/s11256-010-0167-5.

Dweck, C. S. (2006). Mindset: The new psychology of success. Random House.

Eccles, J. S., Lord, S., and Midgley, C. (1991). "What Are We Doing to Early Adolescents? The Impact of Educational Contexts on Early Adolescents." *American Journal of Education* 99, no. 4: 521–542.

Eccles, J. (2009). Who am I and what am I going to do with my life? Personal and collective identities as motivators of action. *Educational Psychologist, 44*(2), 78-89. doi:10.1080/00461520902832368

Fan, X., & Chen, M. (2001). Parental involvement and students' academic achievement: A meta- analysis. *Educational Psychology Review, 13*(1), 1-22. doi:10.1023/A:1009048817385

Faircloth, B. S., & Hamm, J. (2005). Sense of belonging among high school students represent 4 ethnic groups. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 34, 293–309.

Finn, J. D. (1989). “Withdrawing from School.” *Review of Educational Research* 59, no. 2: 117–42. doi:10.2307/1170412

Fuligni, A. J. (2001). “Family Obligation and the Academic Motivation of Adolescents from Asian, Latin American, and European Backgrounds.” *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, no. 94: 61–75.

LaFromboise, T., Coleman, H. L., & Gerton, J. (1993). Psychological impact of biculturalism: Evidence and theory. Psychological bulletin, 114(3), 395.

Garcia-Reid, P., Hamme Peterson, C., and Reid, R. (2015). “Parent and Teacher Support among Latino Immigrant Youth: Effects on School Engagement and School Trouble Avoidance.” *Education and Urban Society* 47, no. 3: 328–343.

Garza, A.V., and Crawford, L. (2005). “Hegemonic Multiculturalism: English Immersion, Ideology, and Subtractive Schooling.” *Bilingual Research Journal* 29, no. 3: 599–619. doi:10.1080/15235882.2005.10162854.

Gonzales, S. M., Ulloa, A. and Muñoz, C. (2016). “‘Ceos don’t cry.’ ‘But, this does:’ Gender, Identity, Language and culture at the periphery of school leadership in Latina/o detroit.” *National Forum of Educational Administration & Supervision Journal* 33, no. 2/3: 29–41.

González, M. S., Plata, O., García, E., Torres, M. and Urrieta, L. (2003). “Testimonios de Inmigrantes: Students Educating Future Teachers.” *Journal of Latinos & Education* 2, no. 4: 233.

Gonzalez, R. (2009). “Beyond Affirmation: How the School Context Facilitates Racial/Ethnic Identity Among Mexican American Adolescents.” *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 31, no. 1: 5–31.

Gonzalez, R., and Ayala-Alcantar, C. (2008). “Critical Caring: Dispelling Latino Stereotypes Among Preservice Teachers.” *Journal of Latinos and Education* 7, no. 2: 129–43. doi:10.1080/15348430701828699.

Graham, Sandra. (2001). “Inferences about Responsibility and Values: Implication for Academic Motivation.” In *Student Motivation: The Culture and Context of Learning*, edited by Fariedeh Salili, Chi Yue Chiu, and Ying Yi Hong, 31–59. Boston, MA: Springer US. doi:10.1007/978-1-4615-1273-8_3.

Griffin, B. W. (2002). "Academic Disidentification, Race, and High School Dropouts." *The High School Journal*, vol. 85 no. 4, pp. 71-81. *Project MUSE*,doi:10.1353/hsj.2002.0008

Grindal, M., and Nieri, T. (2015). “An Examination of Ethnic Identity and Academic Performance: Assessing the Multidimensional Role of Parental Ethnic–Racial Socialization Among a Sample of Latino Adolescents.” *Race and Social Problems* 7, no. 3: 242–55. doi:10.1007/s12552-015-9154-5.

Hayes, A. F. (2013). Introduction to Mediation, Moderation, and Conditional Process Analysis: A Regression-Based Approach. Guilford Press.

Hayes, D., Blake, J., Darensbourg, A., and Castillo, L. (2015). “Examining the Academic Achievement of Latino Adolescents: The Role of Parent and Peer Beliefs and Behaviors.” *The Journal of Early Adolescence* 35, no. 2: 141–161.

Hill, N. E., & Tyson, D. F. (2009). Parental involvement in middle school: A meta-analytic assessment of the strategies that promote achievement. *Developmental Psychology*, *45*(3), 740- 763. doi:10.1037/a0015362

Hill, N. E., & Torres, K. (2010). Negotiating the American dream: The paradox of aspirations and achievement among Latino students and engagement between their families and schools. Journal of Social Issues, 66(1), 95-112.

"Hispanic dropout rate hits new low, college enrollment at new high." (2018). Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/29/hispanic-dropout-rate-hits-new-low-college-enrollment-at-new-high/.

Hogg, M. A., & Williams, K. D. (2000). From I to we: Social identity and the collective self. Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 4(1), 81–97. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2699.4.1.81

Horney, K. (1945). Our inner conflicts: A constructive theory of neurosis. New York: Norton.

Hughes, D., Witherspoon, D., Rivas-Drake, D., and West-Bey, N. (2009). "Received Ethnic–racial Socialization Messages and Youths' Academic and Behavioral Outcomes: Examining the Mediating Role of Ethnic Identity and Self-Esteem." *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 15, no. 2: 112–24. doi:10.1037/a0015509.

Jeynes, W. H. (2007). The relationship between parental involvement and urban secondary school student academic achievement: A meta-analysis. Urban Education, 42(1), 82–110.

Jimenez-Silva, M. (2009). Lo que aprendimos: Advice for the next generation of parents. Journal of the Association of Mexican American Educators,, 43.

Joo, N., Reeves, R. V., & Rodrigue, E. (2016). Asian-American success and the pitfalls of generalization. *Brookings Long Memos*, (20).

Jordania, J. (2015). A new interdisciplinary approach to the study of the origins of traditional polyphony. Muzikologija, 2015(18), 77-98. doi:10.2298/MUZ1518077J

Juvonen, J., Nishina, A., and Graham, S. (2006). "Ethnic Diversity and Perceptions of Safety in Urban Middle Schools." *Psychological Science (0956-7976)* 17, no. 5: 393–400.

Kao, G. (2000). "Group Images and Possible Selves among Adolescents: Linking Stereotypes to Expectations by Race and Ethnicity." In *Sociological Forum*, 15:407–430. Springer, http://www.springerlink.com/index/Q22J64154VGRU838.pdf.

Kao, G. and Tienda, M. (1998). Educational aspirations of minority youth. American Journal of Education, 106(3), 349–384. https://doi.org/10.1086/444188

Kaplan, E. B. (1999). "'It's Going Good': Inner-City Black and Latino Adolescents' Perceptions about Achieving an Education." *Urban Education* 34, no. 2: 181–213. doi:10.1177/0042085999342004.

Kennedy, E., and Smolinsky, L. (2016). "Math Circles: A Tool for Promoting Engagement among Middle School Minority Males." *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science & Technology Education* 12, no. 4: 717–32.

Kisch, J., Leino, E. V., and Silverman, M. M. (2005). Aspects of suicidal behavior, depression and treatment in college students: Results from the spring 2000 National College Health Assessment Survey. Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior, 35, 3–13

Leary, M. R., and Baumeister, R. F. (2017). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. In *Interpersonal Development* (pp. 57–89). Routledge.

Linnenbrink, E., and Pintrich, P. (2002). Motivation as an enabler for academic success. *School Psychology Review, 31*(3), 313-327.

Maciel, J.A., and Knudson-Martin, C. (2014). "Don't End Up in the Fields: Identity Construction among Mexican Adolescent Immigrants, Their Parents, and Sociocontextual Processes." *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 40, no. 4: 484–97. doi:10.1111/jmft.12044.

Maldonado, C. (2006). Does generation status matter? An examination of Latino college completers. Online Journal for Workforce Education and Development, 2(1), 2.

Markus, H. (2008). Pride, prejudice, and ambivalence: Toward a unified theory of race and ethnicity. American Psychologist, 63(8), 651-670. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.63.8.651

Markus, Hazel R., and Kitayama, S. (1991). "Culture and the Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion, and Motivation." *Psychological Review* 98, no. 2: 224–53. doi:10.1037/0033-295X.98.2.224.

Matthews, J. S. (2014). "Multiple Pathways to Identification: Exploring the Multidimensionality of Academic Identity Formation in Ethnic Minority Males." *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 20, no. 2: 143–55. doi:10.1037/a0034707.

Matthews, J. S., Banerjee, M., and Lauermann, F. (2014). "Academic Identity Formation and Motivation Among Ethnic Minority Adolescents: The Role of the 'Self' Between Internal and External Perceptions of Identity." *Child Development*. doi:10.1111/cdev.12318.

McWayne, C., Hampton, V., Fantuzzo, J, Cohen, H., and Sekino, Y. (2004). "A Multivariate Examination of Parent Involvement and the Social and Academic Competencies of Urban Kindergarten Children." *Psychology in the Schools* 41, no. 3: 363–77. doi:10.1002/pits.10163.

Menken, K., and Kleyn. T. (2010). "The Long-Term Impact of Subtractive Schooling in the Educational Experiences of Secondary English Language Learners." *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 13, no. 4: 399–417. doi:10.1080/13670050903370143.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2009). *The nation's report card: Mathematics 2009* (NCES 2010-2451). Washington, DC: Institute of Education Science, U.S. Department of Education.

Nichols, S. L. (2006). "Teachers' and Students' Beliefs about Student Belonging in One Middle School." *The Elementary School Journal* 106, no. 3: 255–71. doi:10.1086/501486.

No Child Left Behind. (2007). U.S. Department of Education. Available at http://www.ed.gov/nclb

Noddings, N. (1992). *The Challenge to Care in Schools: An Alternative Approach to Education. Advances in Contemporary Educational Thought, Volume 8*. Book, Whole. Teachers College Press.

O'Connor, C. (1997). "Dispositions toward (Collective) Struggle and Educational Resilience in the Inner City: A Case Analysis of Six African-American High School Students." *American Educational Research Journal* 34, no. 4: 593–629. doi:10.2307/1163351.

Ovink, S. M., and Kalogrides. D. (2015). "No Place like Home? Familism and Latino/A–white Differences in College Pathways." *Social Science Research* 52: 219–35. doi:10.1016/j.ssresearch.2014.12.018.

Oyserman, D. (2008). "Racial-Ethnic Self-Schemas: Multidimensional Identity-Based Motivation." *Journal of Research in Personality* 42, no. 5: 1186–98. doi:10.1016/j.jrp.2008.03.003.

Oyserman, D., Bybee, D., and Terry, K. (2006). "Possible Selves and Academic Outcomes: How and When Possible Selves Impel Action." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 91, no. 1: 188–204. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.91.1.188.

Paris, D. (2010). "'The Second Language of the United States': Youth Perspectives on Spanish in a Changing Multiethnic Community." *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* 9, no. 2: 139–55.

Park, B., and Judd, C. (2005). "Rethinking the Link between Categorization and Prejudice within the Social Cognition Perspective." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 9, no. 2: 108–130.

Peña, E. D., Gutiérrez-Clellen, V. F., Iglesias, A., Goldstein, B., & Bedore, L. M. (2018). Bilingual English Spanish Assessment (BESA). Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

Perez-Felkner, L. (2015) "Perceptions and Resilience in Underrepresented Students' Pathways to College." *Teachers College Record* 117, no. 8: 1–60.

Peterson, Christopher, and Martin E. P. Seligman. (2004). Character Strengths and Virtues : A Handbook and Classification, Oxford University Press, Incorporated.

Petrone, E. A. (2016). "Reconstructing Culture: The Promises and Challenges as Articulated by Latino/A Youth." *Ethnography and Education* 11, no. 1: 21–39. doi:10.1080/17457823.2015.1036301.

Piña-Watson, B., Lorenzo-Blanco, E., Dornhecker, M., J. Martinez, A, and Nagoshi, J. (2016). "Moving Away from a Cultural Deficit to a Holistic Perspective: Traditional Gender Role Values, Academic Attitudes, and Educational Goals for Mexican Descent Adolescents." *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 63, no. 3: 307–18. doi:10.1037/cou0000133.

Plunkett, S.W., and Bámaca-Gómez, M.Y. (2003). "The Relationship between Parenting, Acculturation, and Adolescent Academics in Mexican-Origin Immigrant Families in Los Angeles." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 25, no. 2: 222–239.

Plunkett, S.W., Henry, C., Houltberg, B.J., Sands, T., and Abarca-Mortensen, S. (2008). "Academic Support by Significant Others and Educational Resilience in Mexican-Origin Ninth Grade Students From Intact Families." *The Journal of Early Adolescence* 28, no. 3: 333–55. doi:10.1177/0272431608314660.

Polletta, F., & Jasper, J. M. (2001). Collective identity and social movements. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *27*(1), 283–305.

Rivas-Drake, D. (2011). "Public Ethnic Regard and Academic Adjustment among Latino Adolescents." *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 21, no. 3: 537–44.

Rodriguez, E., Rhodes, K., and Aguirre, G. (2015). “Intervention for High School Latino Students in Preparing for College: Steps for Consideration.” *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 14, no. 3: 207–222.

Ryan, C. S., Casas, J, F., Kelly-Vance, L., Ryalls, B., and Nero, C. (2010). “Parent Involvement and Views of School Success: The Role of Parents’ Latino and White American Cultural Orientations.” *Psychology in the Schools*, n/a. doi:10.1002/pits.20477.

Robert, M. (1980). The Wisconsin longitudinal study of social and psychological factors in aspirations and achievements. *Research in sociology of education and socialization*, *1*, 59-99.

Sánchez, B., Colón, Y., and Esparza, P. (2005). “The Role of Sense of School Belonging and Gender in the Academic Adjustment of Latino Adolescents.” *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 34, no. 6: 619–28. doi:10.1007/s10964-005-8950-4.

Sands, T., and Plunkett, S. (2005). “A New Scale to Measure Adolescent Reports of Academic Support by Mothers, Fathers, Teachers, and Friends in Latino Immigrant Families.” *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 27, no. 2: 244–53. doi:10.1177/0739986304273968.

Santiago-Rivera, A. L., Arrendondo, P. M., and Gallardo-Cooper, M. (2002). Counseling latinos and la familia: A practical guide. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Santiago-Rivera, A. L., and Altarriba, J. (2002). The role of language in therapy with the Spanish-English bilingual client. Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 33(1), 30–38.

Schwartz, S. J., Zamboanga, B. L., and Hernandez Jarvis, L. (2007). Ethnic identity and acculturation in Hispanic early adolescents: Mediated relationships to academic grades, prosocial behaviors, and externalizing symptoms. Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 13, 364– 373.

Sellers, R. M., Rowley, S. A. J., Chavous, T. M., Shelton, J. N., and Smith, M. A. (1997). Multidimensional inventory of black identity: A preliminary investigation of reliability and construct validity. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73, 805 – 815.

Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Choong-Geun, C., Rausch, M. K., May, S. L., and Tobin, T. (2011). Race Is Not Neutral: A National Investigation of African American and Latino Disproportionality in School Discipline. School Psychology Review, 40(1), 85-107.

Smith, J. S., Estudillo, A., and Kang, H. (2011). "Racial Differences in Eighth Grade Students' Identification With Academics." *Education and Urban Society* 43, no. 1: 73–90. doi:10.1177/0013124510379403.

Stevens, T., Hamman, D., and Olivarez, A. "Hispanic Students' Perception of White Teachers' Mastery Goal Orientation Influences Sense of School Belonging." *Journal of Latinos and Education* 6, no. 1 (2007): 55–70. doi:10.1080/15348430709336677.

Strambler, M. J., Linke, L., and Ward, N. (2013). "Academic Identification as a Mediator of the Relationship between Parental Socialization and Academic Achievement." *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 38, no. 1: 99–106. doi:10.1016/j.cedpsych.2012.11.001.

Suizzo, M. A. (2014). Mexican American parents' involvement in their children's schooling. *Mexican American children and families: Multidisciplinary perspectives*, 135-149.

Suizzo, M.A., Jackson, K. M., Pahlke, E., Marroquin, Y., Blondeau, L., and Martinez, A. (2012). "Pathways to Achievement: How Low-Income Mexican-Origin Parents Promote Their Adolescents Through School." *Family Relations* 61, no. 4: 533–47.

Sullivan, H. S. (1953). The interpersonal theory of psychiatry. New York: Norton.

Supple, A. J., Ghazarian, S., Frabutt, J.M., Plunkett, S.W., and Sands, T. (2006). "Contextual Influences on Latino Adolescent Ethnic Identity and Academic Outcomes." *Child Development* 77, no. 5: 1427–1433.

Taylor, A. Z., & Graham, S. (2007). An examination of the relationship between achievement values and perceptions of barriers among low-SES African American and Latino students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*,*99*(1), 52.

Taylor, L. C., Clayton, J., and Rowley, S.J. (2004). "Academic Socialization: Understanding Parental Influences on Children's School-Related Development in the Early Years." *Review of General Psychology* 8, no. 3: 163–78. doi:10.1037/1089-2680.8.3.163.

Texas Education Agency. (1998). *1998 comprehensive biennial report on Texas public schools.*Austin, TX: Author.

Tough, P. (2012). How children succeed : grit, curiosity, and the hidden power of character / Paul Tough. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Tran, V. C., and Valdez, N. M. (2017). Second-generation decline or advantage? Latino assimilation in the aftermath of the Great Recession. International Migration Review, 51(1), 155-190.

Ufkes, E. G., Calcagno, J., Glasford, D., and Dovidio, J. F. (2016): "Understanding How Common Ingroup Identity Undermines Collective Action among Disadvantaged-Group

Members." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 63: 26–35. doi:10.1016/j.jesp.2015.11.006.

Umaña-Taylor, A., O'Donnell, M., Knight, G, Roosa, M., Berkel, C., and Nair, R. (2014). "Mexican-Origin Early Adolescents' Ethnic Socialization, Ethnic Identity, and Psychosocial Functioning." *The Counseling Psychologist* 42, no. 2: 170–200.

Unger, J. B., Gallaher, P., Shakib, S., Ritt-Olson, A., Palmer, P. H., and Johnson, C. A. (2002). The AHIMSA acculturation scale: A new measure of acculturation for adolescents in a multicultural society. The Journal of Early Adolescence, 22(3), 225-251.

Valadez, J. R. (2002). The influence of social capital on mathematics course selection by Latino high school students. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *24*(3), 319-339.

Valencia, R. (1993). *The Plight of Chicano Students: An Overview of Schooling Conditions and Outcomes. Chapter 1*.

Valencia, R. R. (2002). "'Mexican Americans Don't Value Education!' On the Basis of the Myth, Mythmaking, and Debunking." *Journal of Latinos and Education* 1, no. 2: 81–103

Valenzuela, A. *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*. Book, Whole.Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999.

Valenzuela, A, and Dornbusch, S.M. (1994). "Familism and Social Capital in the Academic Achievement of Mexican Origin and Anglo Adolescents." *Social Science Quarterly* 75, no. 1: 18– 36.

Valenzuela, A., Zamora, E., and Rubio, B. (2015). Academia Cuauhtli and the Eagle: "Danza Mexica" and the Epistemology of the Circle. Voices in Urban Education, 41, 46–56.

Vandiver, B., Fhagen-Smith, P., Cokley, K., Cross, W., & Worrell, F. (2001). Cross's nigrescence model: From theory to scale to theory. Journal Of Multicultural Counseling And Development, 29(3), 174–200. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1912.2001.tb00516.x

Voelkl, K. E. (1997). "Identification with School." *American Journal of Education* 105, no. 3: 294–318. doi:10.1086/444158.

Voelkl, K. E. (1996). "Measuring Students' Identification with School." *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 56, no. 5: 760–70. doi:10.1177/0013164496056005003.

Weiher, G. R., and Tedin, K. (2002) "Does Choice Lead to Racially Distinctive Schools? Charter Schools and Household Preferences." *Journal of Policy Analysis & Management* 21, no. 1: 79–92.

Wentzel, K. R. (1997). "Student Motivation in Middle School: The Role of Perceived Pedagogical Caring."*Journal of Educational Psychology* 89, no. 3: 411.

White, R., and Gilliland, R. (1975). Elements of psychopathology : the mechanisms of defense / Robert B. White, Robert M. Gilliland. New York: Grune & Stratton.

Whiting, E., Feinauer, E. and VanDerwerken, D. (2012). "Taking a Closer Look at Latino Parents at One Spanish–English Two-Way Immersion Charter School." *Journal of Multilingual & Multicultural Development* 33, no. 5: 497–510.

Witherspoon, D., & Ennett, S. (2011). Stability and change in rural youths' educational outcomes through the middle and high school years. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 40, 1077–1090. doi:10.1007/s10964-010-9614-6

Wong, Y. J., Koo, K., Tran, K. K., Chiu, Y.-C., and Mok, Y. (2011). Asian American college students suicide idea-tion: A mixed-methods study. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 58, 197-209.

Yeager, D. S., and Bundick, M. "The Role of Purposeful Work Goals in Promoting Meaning in Life and in Schoolwork During Adolescence." *Journal of Adolescent Research* 24, no. 4 (July 2009): 423–52. doi:10.1177/0743558409336749.

Yeager, D., Walton, G., and Cohen, G. L. (2013). Addressing achievement gaps with psychological interventions. Phi Delta Kappan, 94(5), 62–65.